

RELIGION IN LIFE

A CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY

Vol. XX

Spring Number, 1951

No. 2

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Printed in the United States of America

Published by

ABINGDON-COKESBURY PRESS

150 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK

From "The Atoning Life"

EVEN as the joys of life sum themselves up in the joy of the Lord, so the sorrows of life sum themselves up in our sorrow that the Kingdom of God, perfect human fellowship, should be so far from us. Inevitably the joy and the pain are blended into a single emotion. Indeed, it is a fundamental law regarding all the deepest joys and pains, that they merge into one another. Hence the great Apostle, after he has sung his song of triumphant joy ending in "Nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ," passes straight into the mood of grief and pain. "Brethren, my heart's desire for Israel is that they should be saved." The joy of those who break bread in the Kingdom of God is inseparable from redemptive pain. But joy, not pain, is the inclusive and controlling emotion.

—*The Atoning Life*, by Henry Sylvester Nash.
Harper & Brothers, 1950, p. 79. Used by permission.

RELIGION IN LIFE is published quarterly by Abingdon-Cokesbury Press at 75 cents per copy. Subscription price, \$2.00 per year, \$5.00 for three years in the United States and possessions and Mexico; Canada, postage 18 cents per year additional; other foreign postage, 30 cents per year additional. For the convenience of readers in Great Britain, subscriptions will be received by the Epworth Press, 25-35 City Road, London, E. C. 1, at the rate of nine shillings and sixpence per year.

Publication office, 810 Broadway, Nashville 2, Tennessee. Editorial office, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, New York. Entered as Second Class Matter, August 28, 1942, at the post office in Nashville, Tennessee, under Act of March 3, 1979. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided in Section 1102, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized March 16, 1923.

“For Us Men and Our Salvation”

ALBERT C. OUTLER

IN THE OPENING CHAPTER of *Joseph the Provider* (“Prelude in the Upper Circles”), Thomas Mann gives voice, through the pursed lips of a self-righteous angel, to a suspicion that has doubtless occurred to many another, angel and human: it may just be that, after all, man was a miscreation. It was something near to a mistake for God to combine the virtues of the angels (godlikeness) and the beasts (fruitfulness) in a creature who would then make of these virtues vices of his own.

It would doubtless be going too far, it would be hasty, to consider that the Creator's tender and helpful pity-for-the-erring was the same as error itself. That would be premature, because through the creation of the finite life-and-death world of form no least violence was done to the dignity, spirituality, majesty or absoluteness of a God who existed before and beyond the world. And thus, up to now, one could not speak of error in any full or actual sense of the word.¹

But the equivocal doubt remains: would it not have been just as well to omit the production of a creature of such a precarious virtue and such an appalling talent for tragedy?

I

The paradox of the human situation has been a common theme among all its participants. Man is a creature, yet unlike all other creatures. He is a part of nature, yet transcends nature by the powers of his mind and spirit. He is wholly dependent, yet both creative and responsible. He shares the reign of law in all creation, yet he has a particular kind of spontaneity, of freedom-in-dependence. But there is still another aspect of this paradox which deserves more pondering than it usually receives. It is the tragic discrepancy between the blessedness for which man was made and the tragedy in which he actually exists! For man was made in God's image, and one may think that the *primary* reference of this metaphor is to God's blessedness rather than his rationality. Man was made “to glorify God and to enjoy him forever”—perhaps even to *augment* the blessedness

¹ Mann, Thomas, *Joseph the Provider*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1944, p. 4.

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of God. This human blessedness would be a state of finite freedom-in-dependence, love-in-faith, community-in-responsibility. It would stem from man's acknowledgment and acceptance of his being and his powers at the hands of God. It would involve a freely trustful, lovingly faithful obedience to God's righteous will. In the knowledge of God and in his service, man would indeed find his perfect freedom and his eternal life. In spontaneity, love, and devotion, man would find his true good, as God has designed it for him.

This, or something like it, is clearly what human life was meant to be—and is still meant to be. This is surely the human possibility. And this is the living spring of what true joys and blessedness we know. This is our universally remembered "original righteousness" (*justitia originalis*), the residue of which still remains in our ambivalent ethical experience. This is the kind of life we could have lived and should now be living. Deep inside our distorted self-vision, we see that this is what we *were*. What is more and what is worse, there is no really *good* reason to account for the sorry facts of our actual existence, to explain how life has come to be what it was never made to be.

And yet—and this "and yet" is the preface to every tragic tale—here we are and this is the tragic aspect of our existence. For men, as we know them, are not blessed, are not free, are not living up to the level of their creative powers. The story of mankind is the grim, heartbreaking story of a falling away from our "original righteousness" into an "original sin" (*peccatum originalis*). For there is no accounting for man's aberration in the terms of his own conscious moral experience alone. For *before* we were confronted with anything like a clear and understood option between the crucial alternatives, between faith and unfaith, between dependence and autarchy; *before* blessedness and tragedy were set before us in an open scale—life and we had taken the wrong turning. When self-conscious, responsible existence opened out for us, we were *already* in a quandary. We were *already* involved in morally unfree, destructive, defensive, self-stultifying patterns of behavior. Our moral existence, as well as we can ever remember it, *began* with an uneasy conscience and in an atmosphere of anxiety. And this, or something like it, is so for every man.

Our human quandary may be greatly illumined if we analyze it psychologically and in terms of our interpersonal relations. Much of it becomes intelligible as we come to understand the biological drives of the human individual, his interaction with parents, siblings, and other significant persons, his reaction to physical and social environment, and his share in

the changes and chances of this life. One can hardly overvalue these explanations or their usefulness in assuaging destructive guilt-feelings and in promoting self-knowledge and self-acceptance—*unless* one asserts that they are exhaustive! No environmentalistic account, no psychological theory, quite gets down to the root-tip of our disorder. Nothing quite explains my human situation unless it gives full weight to my own share in it.

The last, bare truth that I must face is that none of the *conditioning* factors in my situation constitutes a really good reason, or a wholly valid excuse, for my predicament. It was certainly affected by all these influences, but it was not *necessitated* by any of them nor by their composite. However much I may find to blame, or to explain, outside myself, I have not fully understood until I see that there is also blame in me. There is something wrong in me that goes deeper than need for readjustment. There is a distortion of life that is not to be corrected by human recapitulation and repair.

The secular mind is often sensitive to the symptoms of the human quandary but has no right word for the disease itself. "Ignorance," "error," "missing the mark," "evolutionary morality," "man for himself" are common phrases that have important meanings, but they do not get down to the depths of man's real estrangement from God, from his fellows, and from his true self. The Christian may be grateful for all the light that secular wisdoms can shed, but after his explorations he will still come round again, with deepened insight, to the candid vocabulary of the Bible for the right language about the human predicament. Man is a *sinner*. The gist and essence of his sin is his refusal to seek his blessedness in God, to acknowledge his existence at God's hands, to respond to God's grace as the proper atmosphere of the good life. "Sin, then," as Hugh Ross Mackintosh put it, "is the claim, explicit or implicit, to live independently of God and to put something, whether self or world, in his place. It is, in fact, *godlessness*, the will that for us there should be no God at all."² St. Paul, tracing the overt unrighteousness of men back to its single source, comes finally to man's "disdain to acknowledge God" and to the human refusal to "honor him as God or give thanks to him" (Rom. 1:28, 21). The consequence is God's "abandonment" of men to their own devices, the following of which brings on unhappiness and all the tragedies that we know.

II

Now, it is rarely claimed that human existence is in fact entirely self-sufficient or noncontingent. That human life depends on some kind of a

² Mackintosh, H. R., *The Christian Experience of Forgiveness*. Harper & Brothers, 1927, p. 61.

reality other than or beyond itself is a nearly universal notion, even if it is often "accepted" only after the fashion of Miss Fuller and Mr. Carlyle. The real question that remains is the nature of this contingency and the degree to which it can be controlled by human willing and wishing, by human intelligence and manipulation.

Let us list briefly some of the major alternatives among the attempts to settle this question. (1) In the first instance, if that upon which human existence depends is in some sense identical with the existence that depends upon it (*e.g.*, "mind" or "spirit"), then the contingent relation between finite and infinite affords the possibility of the assimilation of the finite into the infinite and the sublimation of contingency by identification with the noncontingent. All else in human life beside this bond with the infinite is insignificant or unreal. This is the essential thesis of pantheism and of all the pantheistic mysticisms. (2) Or if the ground of man's dependency be thought to be intelligible but impersonal (the absolute sum of rational forms and relations), then the contingent relation is partially transcended by man's growth in rationality. The rational life is the good life, man's way to blessedness. (3) Again, if the given base of existence is somehow plastic to human thought and fashioning so that devoted pursuit of human ideals finds actual support in nature, then man's contingency is rendered meaningful by (a) the humanistic faith of John Dewey or (b) that of Erich Fromm. (4) Fourthly, reality may be conceived in religious terms and man's dependence upon God be made the central fact. Here, again, there are two alternatives. One is the way of low religion, in which God is thought to be accessible to human wit, bribing, or cajolery; hence, man's good can be secured or enhanced by cultic magic or compulsive moralism. The other alternative is the way of high religion, in which God is confessed as sovereign, free and holy, to be worshiped, trusted, loved—in faith and glad obedience.

One can see that each of these views of existence premises man's contingency, but differs from the other five in its interpretation of the nature of his dependence. They also differ in their appraisals of the untowardness of life. (1) The mystic will tend to suppose that the difficulties and faults of living arise from a defective technique of spirituality. (2) The idealist will tend to correlate man's troubles with his lack of reason (though he is often at a loss to explain man's lack of reason save as an effect of man's troubles). (3) The humanist will think that his failures or ill-success are due to maladjustment or the misapplication of man's pragmatic wisdom,

as developed by the scientific method (one wonders, in passing, if a man in whose language there was no future subjunctive mood could ever conceive the basic postulates of humanism). (4) The materialist will naturally view evil as a disfunction of the process of the production, distribution and enjoyment of tangible goods and values. (5) The man of low religion will explain his woes by reference to his failure to follow his ritual or obey his moral code with sufficient scruple. In all these appraisals of man's quandary, there is a common assumption that what the Bible calls sin is really only error; there is the conviction that man has mismanaged what he could have managed correctly and what he can still get the hang of, if only he can mobilize and apply his own resources properly. (6) Only in high religion do we find a sense of sin that is a sense of estrangement from God. Only here will moral evil be confessed as unfaith, as disdain of God's righteous rule (*Torah*), as rejection of God's holy love and grace (*Agape*).

The quality of a man's sense of sin is, then, a sort of registry of his response to revelation. It is a clue to what he knows, or has been given to know, about the reality of God and the actuality of redemption and forgiveness. If his conscience is self-excusing, it means that he still takes himself principally as a victim who may, in principle, become victor by his own right action. If his conscience is self-accusing in his woes, we *may* have an acknowledgment of responsibility, which is the hallmark of an ethical situation, a sign that God has not left him without witness in his heart. But we must always look further into the unease of the human conscience, to discriminate between *remorse*, which is the last, crippling gesture of autarchy, and *contrition*, which is the first, reviving act of true faith, the beginnings of our acceptance of God's acceptance of us, just as we are, with no further struggle on our part for self-justification.

There is, perhaps, a reason why contemporary psychologists have ignored this traditional Christian distinction between nonproductive and productive guilt, but the reason is itself suspect. For *remorse* is self-disparaging, self-rejecting; and always, by so much, is self-stultifying. It harms and blights and ought to be avoided or got rid of. And if this were all that is involved in a sense of guilt, then the psychologists would be right when they try to evacuate it. But there is also such a thing as *contrition*, "the godly grief" which "produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret" (II Cor. 7:10).³ This involves the view of high religion and

³ Biblical quotations throughout this article are from The Revised Standard Version.

would also bring the psychologist himself under judgment. Attrition (remorse) is a sign that a man in the wrong still refuses to accept the truth about himself, still resents himself for failing (or being caught) or pities and despises himself for the *gaucherie* of his position. Contrition is the acknowledgment of one's wrongness before God, the acceptance of one's situation as tragic, the confession that if life is redeemable, it must be redeemed by God's love which has hitherto been rejected. There is nothing abject about contrition. It is the essential form of self-affirmation and as such is the threshold of a really new beginning, the precondition of a real conversion.

If there are, then, these possibilities in construing the human quandary, how is the choice between them ever made? Even if one admits that his life rests on something more or other than himself, even if he faces the discrepancy between what he might be and what he is, how is the next step to be found and taken? Is it mostly a matter of taste and temperament? Not quite. The man who knows this much about himself and his situation will have seen or glimpsed two more aspects of it. The first of these is the twin fact of entropy and death. The major moral implication of this dyad is that the contingency of our existence is radical indeed; no scheme based upon the indefinite prolongation of any human life or the infinite maintenance of natural energy makes much sense or holds much hope. Death is not only the end of life; it is the suppression of life's meaning and value (this, I take it, is why the Bible always speaks of death as an "enemy"). Death is, as a biological fact, a necessity; it was "invented" to make possible processive and evolutionary development of life. But if death says the final word to life, then life can have significance only as the existence of the individual loses its own unique meaning and value, in some sort of collective, society or the Absolute.

The other twin-faced truth about life which most men see, if only darkly, is the reality of love and blessedness (happiness). There is such a thing as love which is not lust, concern which is not egocentric, mutuality that values one's neighbor as one's own self. Men know this, albeit fleetingly and mostly in ambivalent ways. And this, too, they know: that blessedness (true happiness) is the aroma of love. Never a proper goal in itself, it comes as the concomitant of self-transcending concern for the beloved. Blurred as the vision is, no man can live above the level of the beast who has not been stirred a little and at times by his faith and hope that love is the real truth about life, that its power is stronger than death.

There are then, I believe, two fixed points in the human situation:

death and love. They are universal, pervasive, inversely implicative. And these fixed points will measure the truth within our views of life, for they locate the vital issues to which any gospel about life must speak. That account of human existence is truest which stakes its all on a victory over death and a revelation of love, which understands death and love most profoundly and which reacts to them both most productively. The truest word about death and love would be the most valid gospel to the man who knows his need. It would have to be a gospel of the incarnation of *agape*, of love that fulfills and transcends the law, of the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation to life's source, of the negation of death's negation of life, of the realization of man's possibilities of mature and blessed living.

III

There is such a gospel, and there has been for something more than nineteen centuries. This is the good news: that God, in Jesus Christ, has conquered sin and death; that he was (and is) reconciling the world unto himself; that he has sent his Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins and has opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. The Christian *kerygma*, from its beginnings, proclaimed these glad tidings and coupled with its proclamation a human "therefore": *repent* (change perspectives), *believe* (change the ground of your dependence), *be baptized* (change your community of loyalty), and *share* (in the common life in the body of Christ). And because the Christian gospel faces and answers the challenge of death; because it reveals and manifests the power and blessedness of love; because, in word and deed, it puts men on the way to God's fulfillment of his design for human living—we and all men may be persuaded of its truth and validity.

And yet the power of the gospel has never been fully manifest in history. The story of the life in the community of faith is the best proof a Christian has that Jesus Christ's victory over the demonic was not one of annihilation, nor a suspension of the moral struggle. The plain history of the church can never be used as an irresistible apologetic with the knowledgeable skeptic. Christians must not claim too much from history or experience about the wisdom and power of God in their lives. But neither should they claim too little. Any fair reading of the whole record confronts the sensitive mind with data not to be ignored or explained away. The gospel has not only been proclaimed; it has been exhibited, in act and performance. Always in an imperfect or partial exemplification, the Christian gospel and the Christian ethic have said and done more through the centuries to deal

with the issues of death and love than any other gospel or world-view. One remembers how a thoughtful Christian of the third century was faced with the question of how much claim he could make from history to refute the pagan criticism that Christianity did not count for anything in history. Origen inspected and discarded the notion, now so popular again today, that Christian salvation is established in principle rather than in fact. Instead, he boldly claimed:

We assert that the whole habitable world contains evidences of the works of Jesus, in the existence of those churches of God which have been founded through him by those who have been converted from the practice of innumerable sins. And the name of Jesus can still remove distractions from the minds of men, and expel demons, and also take away diseases; and produce a marvellous meekness of spirit and complete change of character, and a humanity, and goodness, and gentleness in those individuals who do not feign themselves to be Christians for the sake of subsistence or the supply of any mortal wants, but who have honestly accepted the doctrine concerning God and Christ and the judgment to come.⁴

And subsequent human history, taken as a whole, confirms or, at the very least, supports this claim. St. Paul had made another modest claim long before Origen: "For now we *see* in a mirror *dimly*." Yes, but by so much we see! And this dim vision makes the difference between faith and unfaith. "Now I know *in part*." Of course! But the part that I *know* is the basis of the actual fulfillment of the promise of the gospel to newness and abundance of life.

The Christian story has been told many times and in many ways. But in all the tellings there are common elements. The one, sovereign, holy God, who never left himself without witness among the nations has acted, in the fullness of time, to reveal himself in Jesus Christ, to break the power of sin and death, to usher in the "new age," to create a new community of faith and forgiveness. Wherefore, "we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation" (Rom. 5:11). Every version of the authentic gospel has acknowledged that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior to the glory of God the Father. This much is Christian dogma, in its literal and proper meaning: that biblical witness which always and everywhere has been believed by all good Christian folk. But Christians have never been so near agreement on how salvation is accomplished by and through the work of Jesus Christ. There is no soteriological dogma, in the sense just indicated. Hence, what follows here is one version which aims to continue the discussion rather than to conclude it.

⁴ *Contra Celsum*, I, lxvii.

The nearest thing to a common Christian confession about salvation will pivot around three experienced facts: *μετάνοια* (conversion, change of orientation), *καταλλάσσω* (to change from enmity to friendship, to restore a broken friendship), and *ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν* (forgiveness or remission of sins). The gospel tells us of what God has done, and of what men have done and may do, in response to God's gracious doings.

The crisis of faith discloses to a man that God has already acted conveniently to bring him to the threshold of true contrition and repentance. He realizes, even in the very beginnings of his faith, that atonement is a dynamic relationship, the initiative in which has come from beyond himself, and the continuance and perfecting of which are brought to pass by the work of God's good Spirit effecting the growth and maturation of the faithful Christian. There is sufficient testimony that conversion, reconciliation, and forgiveness do occur—that they constitute the triform basis of the Christian life, both in its beginning and its fulfillment. The witness of countless Christians in all ages, not only with their lips but in their lives, furnishes us the data for this conclusion. The problem of soteriology is to account for how these changes happen, to explain atonement as an act of divine grace and also as an act of human freedom. Any answer we may give is an answer of reasoned faith. It is no more, but also no less, than a reflection upon good witness and experience; a delineation of the new relationship between God and man in and through Jesus Christ.

IV

We must begin our account with some stated presuppositions that hedge it about. These presuppositions are themselves derived from faith, and they serve only to guard against soteriological notions that are sub-Christian. The first postulate of faith is that God *is*, sovereign, holy, free, and loving. The second postulate of faith is that God is good and that his will for his human creatures is for their true good and blessedness. The third assumption is that man, God's peculiar creature, is of sacred worth to God and therefore to his fellows and to himself. Fourth, we presuppose that man's freedom is a creaturely freedom. He is actually incapable of autarchy; he can never really cease to be a creature, he can never be wholly independent, however he may strive for it. But he is capable of faith and unfaith, of trust and rejection, of love and estrangement. Hence, fifthly, the gracious work of atonement must always be persuasive; it should not ever be thought to be irresistible. Finally, we must assume that God is somehow involved in the miscarriage and distortion of his designs and

purposes for men, and therefore judge that the divine *compassion* is a reality in God as well as a reality in man's sensing of God's love.

These presuppositions, taken seriously, reject in advance any soteriological doctrine which involves magic, coercion, or a submoral conception of God's redeeming action. The worst theory of atonement possible would be one that suggested that the holy God, against his will or better judgment, was somehow wheedled or appeased sufficiently to forego, at least for some of his erring children, the condign punishment rightly due them all. The next worst would be a theory that made forgiveness cheap and easy, as if, indeed, that was what God was for. Or again, we should reject, without further troubling, any theory of atonement that opposed a merciful Christ Jesus over against the holy and sternly righteous God-Father; of all the works of the Trinity *ad extram*, atonement is the most completely "undivided." Fourthly, we need not even consider any theory which says that men are saved apart from their own responsible participation in God's gracious and redeeming action. And, finally, we must hold all neat formulae in suspicion, for we are dealing with a mystery which remains a mystery even as men share in the results and benefits of its operation.

The New Testament witness is unanimous that it is God whose redemptive purpose and saving grace are the prime movers of man's salvation. St. Paul goes to considerable pains in repeating his conviction that atonement is the work of God (II Cor. 5:11; Rom. 5:1, 8-11; Col. 1:13, 14). Moreover, in the New Testament the aim of God's action in redemption is defined equivalently as reconciliation (II Cor. 5:18) and the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:14, Eph. 1:7). Reconciliation and forgiveness of sins are synonymous terms for two aspects of the same divine-human interaction. God's grace always precedes man's response, but also always waits upon it. The story of salvation is the strange, mysterious epic of God acting in various ways, through the intelligible patterns of creation, through the ethical structures of law and prophecy, through cultus and the divine disturbance of cultus, to bring men to the free and faithful acknowledgment of his Lordship. The story of salvation is also the story of a partial failure, of man's perversion of his God-given reason and the distortion of his God-given moral insight.

The crucial problem in atonement is how man comes ever to serious and radical *repentance*. How are men brought to contrition without self-depreciation, to self-acceptance without self-conceit or self-contempt? How can men come to the place where they make a humanly free acknowledgment of the boundaries of their human freedom, to where they respond in

faithful truth to God's control of their lives in the sure knowledge that this control entails no abrogation of essential selfhood? The barrier to repentance is not that men refuse to bemoan their fate or fail to decry their faults. It is, rather, the power of evil which has seized and now stultifies the human capacity to see and to respond to God's judgment and his grace. The reality of the power of evil (viz., "the power of the demons") is gained from the credence and trust that men place in their idols.

Man's unfaith in God is rarely atheism. More regularly it is a faith in something else, something *relatively* good—in "the beggarly elements of this world," the stratagems and values which promise us success in our experiments in autarchy. It is as men impute saving grace to instrumental goods that evil comes to power. The power of evil is a power conferred by man, then turned against man to his soul's hurt. As men turn their values into absolutes, the demons seize the soul and infest society, possessing men and bending them to their alien ends. This is the quintessential form of estrangement: that man should mistrust and misconstrue God's love, the love of his fellows, and his own self-affirmation.

But why should men ever fall into such an abysmal stupidity and give power to forces which are in themselves powerless? The answer would appear to be that men do so in the pursuit of that penultimate good which seems to them an ultimate one—viz., their freedom. Men find it hard to believe that God's proffer of grace and his demand for righteousness and truth do not constitute a dangerous threat to their priceless freedom. We all know, with a deep and true instinct, that without freedom selfhood is not real, and yet we cannot see that our efforts to maintain a finite freedom by the use of finite means is in itself an absolute preclusion of the possibility of finite freedom in harmony with an infinite freedom of God.

Unfaith generates an irreversible series. It forces man to trust himself alone, and absolutely. It then undermines the basis of that self-trust. This begets anxiety, which leads to unsuccessful efforts to transcend anxiety, and these, in their turn, bring on more anxiety. Onward and downward goes the descent—unless man repents, unless he changes his life's perspective, unless he reorders his relations to the will of God. But how *can* a man make a radical change in his life perspective when he stands so deeply involved in the one from which he is invited to move? How can a man know of his need to change and where would he get the motive power for change unless something happens to him and for him to which he can respond freely in responsible freedom?

Yet what can it when one can not repent?
 O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
 O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
 Art more engag'd.⁵

Repentance, then, far from being the easiest thing in the world—or at least an act well within man's conscious power—is actually the hardest. It calls for something very like a miracle. It is spoken of in the Christian story, therefore, as a gift from God, that is, a *human act* which has a *divine stimulus* as its precondition. Repentance involves trust in God and love to God. But how can a sinful man trust God if God stands as a threat to his cherished autarchy? Why *should* he trust God? How can a sinful man love God in a manner that is neither defensive, nor manipulative, nor exploitative? And how can a sinful man really believe that God's power and love will restore rather than degrade his integrity?

The answer is that sinful man cannot. Yet if he is to repent, he must; and the repentance must be his own, true, free act. This is sin's impasse; this is man's dilemma. And it is in the depths of this dilemma, honestly faced, that the gospel of Christ speaks its good news! This same man, snarled and fouled in a tragic existence that compounds its woes, can find new life, new spiritual and moral power, new poise and creativity, new love of God and neighbor, beginning *here and now*, and growing or maturing indefinitely hereafter—all this in the mighty and marvelous works of God in the life and death and triumph of Jesus Christ, "who for us men and our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of Mary the Virgin and was made man."

While we were yet helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly . . . (Rom. 5:6). God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us . . . (Rom. 5:8). All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. . . . For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (II Cor. 5:18, 19, 21). . . . But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility (Eph. 2:13-14). . . . He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:13-14).

Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw

⁵ *Hamlet*, III, iii.

near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and, all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Heb. 10:19-25.)

V

In the Christian community, as men have pondered the reality and the mystery of the work of Jesus Christ in man's redemption, their thoughts have turned around three main foci: the Incarnation as itself the atoning work, the passion and death (the Cross), and the Resurrection with Pentecost as its immediate sequel. It is almost always recognized that these are but three facets of one unitary Event, and it might be that this Event *as a whole* is what we should mean by the term Incarnation. Nevertheless, it is true that Eastern Christianity has tended, in the main, to emphasize the Logos in the flesh, whereas Latin Christendom has been rather more pre-occupied with the Son of God upon the Cross. I am myself inclined to follow the early Fathers and to place the primary emphasis in Christ's atoning work on the Resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit as the definitive, climactic victory of God over sin and death, the decisive impulse and origination of the Christian faith and the Christian fellowship.

We have spoken of repentance as a sort of miracle, and we have said that it is the threshold of the experience of reconciliation. Now what is called for in a case of estrangement, if reconciliation is actually to take place? Obviously, condemnation from the person in the right and remorse from the person in the wrong will only deepen the estrangement or corrupt the reconciliation. Either will reinforce the penitent's effort at *self*-security or will diminish still further his true freedom. What is more, forgiveness cannot be proffered—just like that—unless the offended one makes an act of identification with the offendant, and this for two reasons. The first is that such detached forgiveness is too easy and submoral; it implies, in effect, that the offense was not really serious after all. The second is that forgiveness given out of the mere largess of the offended is a unilateral action that does not reach the inner citadel of the offendant's self-defense. (Cf. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party*, I, 1: "She might decide to be forgiving and so gain an advantage.")

Repentance and reconciliation do not follow simply upon the disclosure that God is of a loving and forgiving nature. Jesus' revelation of God is not, therefore, decisive in atonement. Jesus revealed to men, and perhaps

could have done so without dying upon a cross, that God, contrary to our guilty fears and hopes, was and is the loving, merciful, heavenly Father who wills no harm for the least of his creatures, who would have his children live in peace, righteousness, and blessedness. Moreover, this revelation of God's fatherly and forgiving love stands adumbrated in the Old Testament and Apocrypha; it had been seen, anastigmatically, by the Stoics and the Platonists. God had always been acting, from the beginning and among all nations, to manifest his nature and his will to men, in the intelligible forms of creation, in the Torah and Covenant, in the prophetic denunciation of unrighteousness and his vision of communal godliness. His righteousness and his love had been declared to men by precept and example, in sundry ways and by divers means. The Christian gospel builds on this revelation, in all its manifold richness, but speaks of something more, that is *redemption*. Atonement, then, means revelation *and* redemption, and both of these accomplished in and through the work of Jesus Christ.

Redemption is the divine compassion at work to heal the festering core of man's estrangement. And this, as we can see from all the human analogies that we know, means suffering. It means the risking and accepting of further offense in order to establish an effective and real identification of the person in the right with the person in the wrong. The barriers of fear, of pride, of guilt are not broken down by declaration. They are removed, if at all, by an act, an act which entails a ransom—a costing that is risked and suffered to make the identification real and free and transforming. They fall before a deed that signifies that the love that is here at work is noncoercive, nonexploitative. And this is the Deed of Jesus Christ, who “humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:8).

In the nature of the case, Jesus' earthly ministry was only the beginning of this Deed; both his divine sonship and his saviorhood went *incognito* in those days and not many men were reconciled to God thereby. Jesus' life came to its appalling end; Divine Love went to its uttermost limit, challenging and accepting the very worst that human hostility to God could wreak, bearding evil in its deepest lair, experiencing tragedy and real desolation. Christ on the Cross was there *ἀντί* (in place of) man, just as he was incarnate *ἀντί* (in place of) God. Christ on the Cross was there *ὑπὲρ* (on our behalf), again in the very same sense that his whole ministry was God with us and for us. And so the Cross is the revelation of God's *ἀγάπη*, love without limit. It is God's self-identification with sinful man, yet without sin, encompassing both sin and death and yet without accepting them as final. The Cross

is the measure of the worst the world can do. It is also the indestructible sign of the unwithdrawn, unconditional favor and grace of God—the very God upon whose power and providence that same world's existence still depends.

On the Cross God in Christ suffers not mere indignity but desolation. But this suffering love absorbs human hostility, melts down the shell of pride, allays the panic of anxiety and presents that self-evident, concrete goodness which is the most powerful prompter to repentance. God in Christ suffers—and remains God, loving to all and gracious in spite of all. All that Jesus taught about God, he also revealed in power on the Cross.

And yet the Cross was also a defeat, a sign of failure. It was the demonstration that men will crucify untainted goodness in defense of their precious autarchy. The Gospels are quite candid in their reporting of the dashed hopes of the disciples after Jesus' death and their reckoning of the Cross as an irretrievable defeat. They had learned much from his teachings and his life, but their hopes had been pinned on the promise of God's redemptive victory over the powers of sin and death. There is hardly a more poignant line in the Bible than Luke 24:21: "*We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.*"

The Cross, then, was not the finish of God's atoning Deed. There had to be still more. There had to be an ending by which man's rejection of God's love was itself rejected by God and turned into a victory which would be the basis for man's acceptance of God's acceptance of him. The Resurrection is, therefore, the denouement of the atonement, for in it God re-established his sovereign power after a real defeat, and in his victory achieved the decisive subjugation of evil. The Resurrection was an event that radically changed the human situation. Here was the actual "breaking of the power of the demons," "the leading forth of the captives," the negation of death's negation of life's meaning. From this time forward, the power of evil over man can never be better than a shameful fraud and cheat. Human despair has never since had a true warrant for being inconsolable. God, who in Christ's suffering identified himself with the human tragedy, now in Christ's resurrection makes his love operative in the believer's heart and will. The demons may still win pitched battles but they have already lost the war. From the first Easter until the Parousia, the basis of human life is different. Men may, and do, "pass out of death into life" (I John 3:14); men are "delivered from the dominion of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of (God's) beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13-14). The aboriginal harmony of nature and

grace is reconstituted in viable germ, and man's growth toward Christian maturity (Eph. 4:13) has begun again, at a new level. As God's love was made visible in that strange man hanging upon his cross, so also in the Resurrection, God's *power* is made effectual in men who will make the venture of faith in response to the gift of faith.

Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but take your share of suffering for the gospel in the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago, and now has manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (II Tim. 1:8-10.)

In the faith of the New Testament, Christ's resurrection and man's redemption are everywhere closely correlated. All the Gospels reflect this resurrection faith. It is the pivot and fulcrum of the apostolic preaching. St. Paul stakes the whole of his gospel upon it (I Cor. 15:17, 19). Cf. also Acts 2:32, 38; 3:15-19; 4:10; 5:30-31; 10:40; 13:17-33; Luke 20:36; John 3:13-17). The Easter-faith has been a glorious, perennial motif of historic Christianity. And now, in our time, the Gospel's declaration of man's redemption still, as it seems to me, stands or falls with the Christian conviction of the reality of the Resurrection as event rather than myth, the climactic event in the total Event of Jesus' life, death and triumph. One might observe in passing that, as the Cross was the chief stumbling-block, τὸ σκάνδαλον, in the Christian preaching to Jews and Greeks who might have otherwise managed the Resurrection, so nowadays, it is the Resurrection which is the scandal in the gospel for the modern man who could otherwise manage the Cross. Yet there it is, at the very heart of the New Testament and the Christian Gospel. It is still, I believe, the deepest and the most powerful motif in the worship and ethic of authentic Christianity.

This is atonement: that God who made us for blessing and blessedness, and who has suffered our estrangement without abandoning his divine concern or claim, has made, on his own motion, a way of reconciliation which guards both our freedom and his holiness. This way is the sending of his Son into the world, not to condemn the world but to draw men, in reconciliation, to their true good, their salvation. Atonement is the effectual act of love and the actual fulfillment of all righteousness. Sin is still extant, but it has been overcome in principle and is being overcome in fact, by the sanctifying grace of God. Death is still the unevadable terminus for all our lives, but it no longer confronts us with the challenge of blank meaning-

lessness. The Christian hope of a new life "in the world to come" is neither a mere orectic myth nor the logic of man's frustration. It is rather a confidence based on a Deed already done, in which we and all faithful men may share.

VI

Nothing wrought on Calvary or in Joseph's tomb is re-enacted in a human life by an irresistible grace. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. This means that men must share in the transaction. They must respond, acknowledge, trust, believe, and live out their faith. It is not that men merely "see" or "hear" the truth about God. Faith is rather an acknowledgment of God's redeeming action in one's living, the appropriation of his grace into the stuff of existence. This is the life of grace: that men should live in a continual awareness of God's extravagant goodness, his unwavering concern for man's blessedness which is his design for human living. Man's response to grace in redemption is no different in principle to what his response to grace in creation and the law might and ought to have been. For then, as now and always, men have two ways set before them: the acknowledgment of God as Creator, Judge, Redeemer, and Consummator of our existence, the ground and agent of man's blessedness; or, the wayward struggle to live as if there were no God, as though nature were the outer border of existence, as though life were only what we can wrest or speak or wheedle from it. For the Christian the way of faith is not the shaping up of formulae or systems. It is the way of recognition, response, reaction to an operative wisdom, reality and love, not of our own conceiving or control, yet most fit and congruent to all our needs and ends.

All this, and more, is said, and nowhere else more grandly, in the great Prayer of Consecration in the Order for Holy Communion in the Book of Common Prayer:

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world. . . .

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. . . .

Is God Really Omniscient?

GEORGE I. LAURENSEN

IT IS AN INTERESTING FACT that of all the divine attributes expounded in Christian theology, one alone stands unqualified—that of Divine Omniscience. We say that God is omnipotent, to be sure—he can do everything *except* that he cannot deny himself. God is omnipresent, *except* in the inner citadel of the human heart which must be opened to him from within. God is all-loving, *except* that he cannot love sin. And so on through the glorious catalogue of attributes until we come to omniscience, and here we affirm an unqualified Divine omniscience involving a knowledge of the end from the beginning and every detail in between. Should this be so? Christian theology here meets a serious dilemma that does not appear to have been resolved.

For the Calvinist there is no problem. The doctrine of absolute Divine omniscience is a necessary foundation for the whole system of theology under that name. Only the God who knows the end from the beginning can foreknow and predestine every act and every incident. The type of Divine sovereignty founded on such an attribute is a long recognized theological conception. That it has its problems is attested by the vigor of the protest and proclamation by the Wesleys and other leaders of the Evangelical Revival. Arminianism has challenged the more rigid aspects of the Calvinistic position and has proclaimed universal grace and salvation as possible for all men.

THE DILEMMA OF ARMINIANISM

Strangely enough, a review of works of theology shows that while those of the Arminian school proclaim the doctrine of human free will and demonstrate from human experience the fact of individual responsibility for choices made, yet they do not appear to have challenged or qualified the basic doctrine of Divine omniscience. They have of necessity qualified the doctrine of Divine omnipresence. Arminians and Evangelicals generally proclaim with vigor and conviction the doctrine of free will and responsibility for choices, but hold tenaciously to Divine omniscience and fore-

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knowledge. It is commonly affirmed in the works of such writers, and is a commonplace in Methodist teaching, that Divine foreknowledge does not involve foreordination of all events. We hear some preachers proclaiming the closed cycle of prophecy, with human events in all detail having been written in advance, enshrined in pyramids and in cryptic passages of Holy Scripture, while at the same time proclaiming a dynamic gospel of the possibility of changed sequences through penitence and free choice of new alternatives. The evangelical faith needs the latter, but it is strange that so tenaciously the former is retained when obviously these two doctrines cancel each other out. It is my purpose to try to show that here lies a dilemma that must be resolved.

Given the doctrine of absolute foreknowledge and omniscience in the Creator, we cannot have at the same time real freedom of choice in a created being. These two doctrines are no more able to exist together than are the irremovable object and the irresistible force. They are mutually contradictory; one or the other must go. This is of course heresy to many thinkers, but it is a point which must be discussed if we are to resolve an inherent dilemma in our theology. The preacher who vehemently affirms that, whatever any man or group of men may do or not do, there are unchangeable and unavoidable events and incidents lying ahead in the immediate or distant future that have been prophesied in Holy Scripture, has thereby taken any sense out of his own work of seeking to lead men and women to choices of new alternatives. If these events are all foreknown, they are foreordained, and any attempt to alter them is in vain. Many are conscious of this dilemma; but while affirming the fact of a closed system of prophecy they continue their evangelistic efforts in loyalty to a true instinct. It is actually a case of the heart having reasons which the head knows not of.

The usual statement given in our theological works is that foreknowledge does not necessarily imply foreordination. The argument builds up strongly a case for absolute Divine omniscience and an equally strong case for freedom of the will, and then there is a leap across the gap, leaving the gap still there. This is the well-known line of such arguments. A father may know his child so intimately that he might claim that if he can know the circumstances surrounding his child at any time, he can foretell how that child will react to those circumstances. But, it is rightly claimed, such foreknowledge does not mean that the father foreordains the act of the child. It is a free choice of a free personality. We agree thus far, even though we say that the foreknowledge of the best human father is only

approximate. There is an element of the unpredictable. However, the argument now takes a leap into a fallacious position. It is claimed that God, who knows his children so much better than any human father, can foreknow what they will do in all circumstances *without* his foreknowledge being foreordination. There is a real fallacy here which has been the root of the dilemma of Arminianism.

FATHER AND CREATOR

To argue from the human father to the Divine Father is to ignore an essential difference. The human father comes in on the stream of life, an inheritor of its tendencies and subject to its characteristics. To a very limited degree does he condition his child's personality or is he responsible for his child's choices. They are both created beings. Not so the Creator, from whom the stream of life flows. I strongly contend that when a Creator foreknows every action and choice of his created subject, then his foreknowledge necessarily involves foreordination. If a Creator has the attribute of absolute foreknowledge, then there is no responsibility in the acts of his created beings. Against this I see no valid argument.

It is no wonder that the Calvinist, having established his premise of Divine omniscience, is so logical in his acceptance of predestination and foreknowledge, and election to damnation or salvation. It is a consistent position, and takes any sense out of human responsibility or power of choice. But if there is any reality in human freedom of will, however limited, this must imply a re-examination of the doctrine of absolute Divine omniscience and foreknowledge. This is a dangerous occupation full of many pitfalls, but it is an occupation full of exciting prospects which are scriptural and which do make sense of theology and resolve this dilemma. It rescues Life from mechanism and determinism, and opens vistas of rich dynamic possibilities. This is a dynamic creation. There must be an over-all strategy of ultimate destinies, but the steps toward that are full of possibilities of delays, local frustrations, and temporary defeats. At the same time there are the rich and costly relationships of a Holy Father-Creator with his created beings acting freely within certain limits.

SUGGESTED QUALIFICATIONS

In the light of this what can be said? Should we not affirm that when the Divine Creator said, "Let us make man," he thereby chose the costly path of voluntary self-limitation? His foreknowledge is omniscient to this extent only: He knows everything that his children, by their free

choice, *could do* in every circumstance, and he also knows what *he* would *need to do* in every such choice to hold his control over the ultimate outcome. He cannot foreknow what his children *will do* in every circumstance, without taking all reality out of their choice or all responsibility out of their action.

If he foreknows every act of his created beings, he is responsible from the moment of creation. But if he, being Love, accepts the fact of voluntary self-limitation and grants a limited measure of freedom of will to his created beings, then with that, he accepts the costliness of being ready to go out if necessary to bring home to the family circle anyone who uses his freedom willfully, who rebels and strays. Man, to be man, must be able to do the unpredictable at the point of actual choice. Yet the Divine foreknowledge of limitless possibilities and the Divine love which from creation accepted the possibility of the Cross, holds the scheme of things under control. The Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world. The way to the full achievement of the ultimate Divine purpose is the costly way of the interplay of personalities, under the overruling control of self-giving Divine love revealed in Calvary.

Against this thesis, there is propounded the view that to proclaim any limitation in the Creator is to take perfection from him and to leave part of his creation outside of his power. In answer we would enquire what is being set out as the basis of perfection. Is it a mechanical perfection in terms of a cold arbiter who stands in utter aloofness from the agony of his creation, watching dispassionately a great process unfold, which in minutest detail has been foreknown from before the commencement of the creative activity? If so, it is a strange imperfection in terms of personality. The nearer one draws to perfection in personality, the richer does one find the trust imposed in other personalities and a recognition of the rights of choice. So in the Divine Nature, which by Christ's own word is known to be at least Holy Personality, the perfection is revealed in the voluntary self-limitation of Divine omniscience, all kept within the costly circle of Holy Love.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, I would reaffirm that Divine omniscience is complete only to this extent. God knows *everything*—the end from the beginning—*except* what his children, acting within a limited measure of real freedom, *will do* in every situation. He also knows what he will have to do in every possible choice, and the cost to himself if their choice should involve the crucifying of Christ afresh. Does this not make life dynamic? Does it not put a new

glory and urgency into evangelism? Does it not also mean that we can claim that when you and I face some of the many crossroads of life, God himself, as it were, holds his breath while we make our choices? Otherwise how could it be said that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth?

Every day is a day of possibilities. The very course of history has been changed by individual choices in the past—good and bad. A Wesley and a Hitler are not automatons, but by their choices they set in train sequences which have been for God himself joy or agony. The last word that will be spoken about this world will be spoken by God in the triumph of his holy Love—a word of judgment and of pardon, and of victory for all that is in harmony with his will.

From Dr. Edwin Lewis

We can only be grateful to Mr. Laurenson for his article. What he calls "unqualified omniscience" is one of the most incredible ideas to which the Christian mind has ever been called to give its assent. What can be made of the idea that God possesses, eternally and instantly, complete knowledge of all that ever was, that is now, and that ever will be, together with all that might ever have been but was not, might now have been but is not, might ever yet be but will not be?

There is, indeed, a type of speculation which, setting up the concept of "the Absolute," equates this Absolute with "Pure Being which is also Pure Intellect," makes itself the sole Object of its own Thought, and therefore asserts the omniscience of the Absolute by identifying the One Eternal Knower with the One Eternal Known. The Self-existent and Self-knowing Absolute embraces in one eternal moment all actuality and all possibility.

Under such a conception, there can be no distinctions of past, present, and future, because there can be no "time." For understandable historical reasons, this type of speculation made its way into the stream of Christian tradition. One result of the invasion was the complete identification of "divine foreknowledge" and "predestination," parent of a dreadful progeny. "The biblical revelation" was held to require this. It was not recognized that what was really happening was the ruthless adaptation of "the biblical revelation" to the Procrustean bed of apriorism.

For the one thing that cannot be found in the Bible is this Absolute! The God of the Bible is Creator and Redeemer. If it be held that only

the Absolute could create, the reply would have to be that, in creating, the Absolute ceased to be the Absolute because he ceased to be "the Alone." The unrelated enters into relationships because now he shares existence with "otherness." What God may be "in himself considered" must give way to what God is "in his relation to us."

The interest of the Bible is not in the unrelated but in the related God, and in the scope and the significance of the relatedness. The God of the Bible is self-committed to a vast enterprise. The enterprise is a real process in time: in fact, time and the process are co-existents. Into the process go natural sequences, a "before" and "after." History becomes a varied web. Free intelligences are integrated with the movement. Contingencies mingle with necessities. Predictabilities are made questionable by unpredictabilities. Apparent at every point, sometimes more so, sometimes less so, is a malign power, a faculty of destruction, the never quite subdued "enemy" of the Creator, the "intruder" who devastated the Garden of Eden. To reduce this temporal and historical and personal process, characterized as it is by incalculable ranges of alterity, to nothing whatever but the mechanical actualization of a pre-existent idealistic blueprint, is to indulge a speculative fancy intolerable to biblical realism—to say nothing of the demands of personal experience. Nothing can be quite so unreal to the human mind as a God to whom what is most utterly real to that mind, namely, life as a hazardous process in time, is not real at all. The single prophetic pronouncement, "In all their affliction, he was afflicted," if it be taken seriously, brings God sufficiently within the orbit of human experience to create the conviction that what happens to us means something to him *at the time it happens* that it never could have meant for him "before."

This possibility of new happenings for God is the more apparent when we consider the Incarnation of the Eternal Word. Under the point of view of "unqualified omniscience," there is no difference for God between the Incarnation as "foreknown" and as historical actuality. The cost of our redemption to God was no more at the moment of the Cross, when "all nature shuddered at the groans of her expiring Lord," than it was before "the morning stars sang together for joy." This is a high price to pay for metaphysical dogmatism. Better a crude anthropomorphism that sees the creative-redemptive process as a dramatic conflict that is real at every step, and of which the outcome is always in the balances, than the reduction of crucial moments to virtual nihilisms. Conflict, even supposing that God initiates it, means opposition, and the nature of the opposition destroys both absoluteness and omniscience. God will do what he will do—that is, what

his nature and his purpose combine to prescribe—in any given situation, but the situation itself must first appear. There are some things, especially those involving the “strategy” of his “enemy,” that even God must wait to know, and if he must wait to know, then he must also wait to act.

“Then we cannot trust even God!” That does not follow at all. We may trust God for the future for the simple reason that God trusts himself. The initial act of faith, of which both creation and redemption are the issue, is God’s faith in his own resources. The only God we need—or have!—is the God who acts on the assumption of his own adequacy. It is with a faith-certainty, not with a knowledge-certainty, that God faces a wide-open future. This alone is what invests the time-process with the solemnity of moral drama. “Hell” and “heaven” wait alike on the outcome. God’s vote is for “heaven,” and he votes with all that he has: precisely this is the significance of the Incarnation. We ought not to demand for God a “knowledge” he did not demand for himself. Instead, as men caught in the conflict which is existence, we are to take him at his own self-estimate, and have faith in his faith. “Take up the cross, and follow me!” For the rest:

I know not where his islands lift
 Their fronded palms in air;
 I only know I cannot drift
 Beyond his love and care.

EDWIN LEWIS

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From Dr. Carl F. H. Henry

Mr. Laurensen asserts that the doctrine of Divine omniscience belongs properly, as Calvinism has insisted, with Divine foreordination. On good ground he is dissatisfied with the Arminian alternative of a *scientia media* based on God’s foresight of free human choices, especially when this is combined with an evangelical preaching of prophecy—doubtless the most conspicuous illustration that the Bible teaches that the divine knowledge includes the free acts of men (cf. I Sam. 23:9-13, II Kings 13:19, Ps. 81:14-15, Matt. 11:23, 24, Acts 2:23). He does not state that Arminian theology frequently invokes God’s *eternity* as enabling him to know future human decisions as present; but he would say that this evades the central difficulty, of how indeterminable acts can be known prior to their psychological decision, and misconceives the Divine eternity in its relation to time.

But Mr. Laurenson is unimpressed equally with the Calvinistic alternative (which is really that the divine foreordination is the basis of foreknowledge, and not that foreknowledge is a postulate necessary to support predestination as he assumes). His objection is straightforward: "If a Creator has the attribute of absolute foreknowledge, then there is no responsibility in the acts of his created beings." The issues, apparently, are: Divine omniscience and human irresponsibility; limited Divine knowledge and human responsibility.

These are, of course, not biblical alternatives. It would be helpful if this author were to find a single biblical suggestion that human responsibility is made possible by the limitation of Divine knowledge. But he frames his views at a remarkable distance from a biblical interaction. The biblical view, after all—whether one accepts it or rejects it—is determined by exegesis alone. It may appear philosophically burdensome, when evaluated on contrary presuppositions, but that does not convert one's preferences into biblical theology—a squaring with which may properly be required of Mr. Laurenson's view, since he claims that it is "full of exciting prospects which are scriptural." Christian theology has traced not to a misguided instinct but to interaction with the inscripturated revelation, the view that the Divine knowledge is perfect, universal, and infallible; the doctrine of omniscience has rooted, not in a theological postulate required to support Calvinism, but in passages like Psalm 139. Hence the doctrine cannot be associated exclusively with the straw image of "a cold arbiter . . . in utter aloofness from the agony of his creation, watching dispassionately a great process unfold. . . ." Actually our author's difficulties grow out of philosophical difficulties to the adjustment of which biblical theology is quickly accommodated.

The syllogistic structure of the argument requiring the new view is not apparent. The proposed conception of free will as total indeterminism has long been attacked as making responsibility impossible. The notion that only *causally undetermined* acts can involve responsibility, that responsibility involves the power of contrary choice, that "man, to be man, must be able to do the unpredictable at the point of actual choice," is *not* self-evident; so it would seem to call for more than mere statement. Not only does such a view tacitly deny that man has a character, in view of the requirement of the will's constant power to reverse itself, but it would seem to jeopardize the reality of human responsibility.

Recent liberal theology, in its realistic and neosupernaturalistic expres-

sions, is reasserting man's "responsible inability," although its development of this thesis retains only a superficial connection with biblical and evangelical thought. Moreover, the Calvinistic assertion that determinism and responsibility are compatible continues to have competent philosophical support.¹ Only when Mr. Laurenson actually establishes his case that Divine certainty and its corollary, foreordination, precludes human responsibility, can his alternative gain weight.

That alternative is: God foreknows all *possibilities*. He controls the general course of things. He grants man freedom (defined as unpredictable choice) only in a limited area in which the unknown actualities are sure to be overruled by the ultimate control of Divine love.

My objection is twofold. (1) The solution involves a compromise of the biblical view of God. And this compromise of the Divine omniscience involves in turn more staggering compromises, growing out of the exchange of a biblical for a philosophical theology. For the "new" view—"an over-all strategy of ultimate destinies . . . full of possibilities of delays, local frustrations, and temporary defeats"—is a retreat from Paul to Plato, affording us a teleology combined with a merely general providence, as Greek dualism affirmed. (2) Moreover, the view confines human responsibility (on his premise that this requires Divine ignorance) to comparatively unimportant limits; man's responsibility is dissociated from those ultimate issues which matter most.

If, to avoid this narrowing, Mr. Laurenson widens the area of freedom—indeed, he writes, ambiguously, both of the Lamb slain in eternity and of the "possibility" of the Cross—on his own premise the ultimate direction of things is jeopardized and runs the risk of collapse. If, to avoid this, the certainty of the ultimate outcome is stressed, and the hedging in of man's choices by the Divine purpose does not destroy his responsibility, why should the Calvinistic thoroughness in this regard be objectionable? If free acts must be uncertain, must they not be unforeseeable in their larger, no less than in their more restricted, implications? Does not the proffered solution require a wholly open universe, and not a modified finalism? Either a complete divorce of foreordination and God's knowledge, making the latter wholly inferential, or a complete integration—is this not the real issue? If the certainty of human decision is foreordained in such a way as to assure a general futurity of events, the objection to a detailed futurity might

¹ Cf. Gordon H. Clark, "Determinism and Responsibility," in *The Evangelical Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Jan. 15, 1932): "Choice is that mental act . . . which initiates a human action. . . . The ability to have chosen otherwise is an irrelevant consideration and has no place in the definition."

lose force when it is evident, as to the Calvinist, that God's foreordination is the very ground, and not the obstacle, of human responsibility.

Space is lacking to analyze Mr. Laurenson's pragmatic support for his view. Against it, the fact remains that the "new" doctrine no longer retains an all-comprehensive Divine cognizance of the totality of man's life (a claim which proceeds from irreligion more than from Christian theology)—and that it retains the urgency of evangelism not because of its novel features but because of the assurance of the ultimate triumph of righteousness which the new view borrows from the traditional theology.

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American Protestantism at the Mid-Century Mark

PAUL HUTCHINSON

FIFTY YEARS AGO the West turned another century milestone in an outburst of self-congratulation and boundless confidence. I vividly remember the bountifully illustrated but hack-written book which my father gave me to mark the event. *The History and Triumphs of the Nineteenth Century*, it was called, and I read it until it fell to pieces. That was the mood of 1901—exultation at triumphs lately won by man, and expectation of even greater to come. It was a mood as characteristic of the church as of all the rest of man's organized interests. I can find no record that when, in its first issue for 1901, the publisher of a then modest church weekly in Chicago changed its name to *The Christian Century*, any of his readers suggested that he might be taking liberties with the license of prophecy.

It is impossible to recapture that mood as we pass the half-century post. Man today is grim-visaged, apprehensive, pursuing his multifarious ends under a mocking sense of impending tragedy. This is certainly so everywhere outside the Communist orbit, and I am one of those who are skeptical that the tensions within the Soviet paradise are much, if any, less than they are within what we are told is our decadent and disintegrating society. Today it is the size of our problems, not of our achievements, which impresses us. Perhaps that is one of the things the matter with us. But we cannot help it: the problems are here, while the means for their solution elude us.

I

This sense of life's tragic nature—or of its mocking nature—is as prevalent in this country as elsewhere. We know that we Americans enjoy the highest standard of living ever attained by a nation and a position of world power equaled by no other state and challenged by but one. But this does not reassure or satisfy us. In my *Times* this morning (I am writing on this most hollow of holidays, Armistice Day) I read:

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. . . . at the press conference he [General Eisenhower] asserted that young Americans ought to meet the perilous times of today with enthusiasm. "They should not let world conditions get them down and feel pessimistic," he said. "The United States is the greatest force God has let come upon this footstool he has planted." The general said he was trying to instill this idea in young America at every educational institution he visits.

Consider the implications regarding young America's state of mind when *this* is the crusade which a national leader with Eisenhower's contacts feels is required!

Unless I misread the signs of the times, however, Columbia's president—who may revert to martial glory before this can be printed—fails sadly to diagnose the real causes of the "pessimism" which afflicts us. It is not simply "world conditions" which have us down, although no one can deny their influence. Our trouble goes deeper. It goes all the way down to the fact that man, at this mid-century check-point, in contrast to man as he was when the century opened, is being overwhelmed by a realization of his own shrinking size. Perhaps his problems are no larger than they were fifty years ago, but when he views them from the perspective of his own diminished stature they loom gigantic.

Man is oppressed by his apprehension that he is shrinking as a moral creature. He is approaching a point at which he will almost deny that he is any longer a moral agent. More and more his actions seem to be governed by vast, impersonal forces, the operations of which he cannot understand, much less control. He tries to redress his impotence by calling in the power of government, and soon government likewise becomes for him a vast, impersonal mechanism which penetrates every aspect of his life with its controls but which he—man as individual—rules as little as he rules the tides. So he has become a shrinking political creature. "The people," says John Dos Passos in his 1950 book, *The Prospect Before Us*, "the people become more and more apathetic because the problems [of politics] are too much out of their grasp for their understanding. Nobody knows which wheel to put his shoulder to." True enough, and Mr. Dos Passos doesn't tell them.

Has man also become a shrinking religious creature? Here, for the purposes of this review, is the vital question. Have these fifty years undermined man's confidence in his ability to distinguish between good and evil? Have they diminished his sense of the reality of salvation? Have they increased his doubts of his capacity for sainthood? I prefer to leave the questions for the reader, although I have my own answers for them. But I suggest that it is not without bearing on any answers that, as the half-

century ends, a characteristic emphasis of the pulpit is on the stain of sin which disfigures every human act—even attempted repentance—and hence on man's hopeless lostness and certain spiritual defeat except as he may, in some experience beyond history, be rescued by the inscrutable grace of God.

II

In terms of American life, the past fifty years have seen a relatively simple society transformed into the complex and sophisticated "Colossus of the West." The process really began, as F. J. Turner pointed out, ten years before the century's turn when the last frontier disappeared. It was only a couple of decades after that when population pressure forced the end of mass immigration, although the American people have continued to be astonishingly mobile, as California's leap to second place in population among the states shows.

As the nation became urbanized and industrialized, Protestantism lost its former domination, except in the South, where fewer immigrant families settled and where the shift to a factory-based way of life came very slowly. On the other hand, as the cities came to sway the life of the rest of the country, the Roman Catholic Church grew rapidly in influence. One might almost write the story of that communion during the half-century in terms of the transformation of its state of mind from that of a minority to that of a majority church. Most of the points of friction which today exacerbate Protestant-Catholic relations result from the fact that American Catholicism has begun, within the past three decades, to attempt to guide public policy as it maintains (see the writings of the late Msgr. John A. Ryan) the "true church," on attaining majority status, should.

Evidences of the loss of Protestant influence can be seen in many directions. It is hard to believe, for example, that almost up to the turn of the century the Protestant church press was one of the most potent elements in the nation's journalism. During this period the denominational college has usually found it necessary either to rid itself of that character or to slip well back in the academic ranks. (Methodists will recall the struggle over Vanderbilt.) A parallel development is now overtaking church philanthropies, for soaring costs of operating hospitals and other social agencies require funds in amounts which only public or semipublic sources can supply. Most striking of all, in city after city, has been the diminishing civic importance of the Protestant church "on the avenue" or "downtown." In most centers of population today, the "strong" Protestant churches are typically in the suburbs, where they have about the same influence on the city's morals as the commuter has on its politics.

Yet it may be questioned whether the Catholic churches, though they have maintained their parishes intact, have accomplished much more in behalf of civic righteousness. That the Roman Catholic Church has an enormous influence in most of our great cities, outside the South, no one will deny who knows how such cities are run. But this influence tends to be political, not religious. Our city bosses such as Curley or Hague or Kelly or Flynn would never dream of acting in opposition to the cardinal or the diocesan chancellor. But this has not noticeably lifted the moral level of American politics. If, as and when the "Catholic vote" in the great population centers is demonstrated to be as undeliverable an illusion as the "Protestant vote" long ago turned out to be, Catholicism's urban influence will quickly diminish.

This is not to say that these fifty years have seen Protestantism lose all its ability to affect public policy. Not at all—as the roars against "Protestant meddling" testify which on occasion rise from interested quarters. But Protestant influence on public affairs is by no means as direct or as confident as it was fifty years ago. One reason may lie in the failure of certain church-sponsored reforms to produce the social miracles promised. This has been the period, it must be remembered, of the rise and fall of the Eighteenth Amendment. Even women's rights, secured largely with church help, have brought no striking improvement in public morality. Frances E. Willard stands securely on her pedestal in Statuary Hall at the national capitol, one of Protestantism's great gifts to the nations. But Miss Willard belongs to the nineteenth century; she has had no counterpart in this.

III

In terms of its own life, American Protestantism has witnessed during the half-century a decided movement toward greater formality in its services of worship. "Churchmanship" is no longer a monopoly of Episcopalians and Lutherans. Stately liturgy has grown commonplace in communions which, five decades ago, were vigorous in their opposition to anything which smacked of "Romish" tendencies. I worship in a Methodist church where the service today opens with the entrance of an acolyte to light the altar candles and closes when he reappears to snuff them. There is a Unitarian church in Chicago in which a sanctuary light burns constantly, although there is as yet no reserved sacrament.

To be sure, Protestantism still has its revivals, its gospel songs, its extempore prayer (in which the *tempore* too often runs away with the *ex*), and in many a congregation the atmosphere on a Sunday morning is more

that of an informal family reunion than of an attempted communication with the Divine. The record of these recent years must take as much account of Billy Sunday—and presently, perhaps, of Billy Graham—as of the influence of Fred Winslow Adams and the Federal Council's Commission on Worship. Of the proliferation of sects, likewise, there seems to be no end. It is probable that a majority of American Protestants continue to worship in congregations where the liturgical movement has never penetrated.

Nevertheless, the trend in Protestant worship is toward the formal and stately. This is to be seen in the gowned ministers—where is the Prince Albert of the 1900's?—and the vested choirs. It is to be seen in the quest for "good" music, in the hymnal and in the choir stalls. Most of all it is to be seen in the changes in church architecture. Such congregations as have not pulled down their auditoriums (the word is used advisedly) of the Grover Cleveland period to make way for Gothic structures have often felt compelled at least to remodel the chancel so that lectern balances pulpit.

At the moment there is a minor revolt brewing against Gothic as the expression of Protestant aspiration in stone and brick. But where a congregation approves a modernistic treatment, such as one may see in the churches Eliel Saarinen designed for the Christian Church of Columbus, Indiana, or the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Minneapolis, there is no diminution in the emphasis on formal worship. And the modernistic revolt has not gone far. Too many building committees, say pastors, insist that they want what they build to "look like a church"—by which they usually mean Gothic, though occasionally they mean Georgian.

As for the trend toward ritual, the theological seminaries are everywhere encouraging it. I will not soon forget the bewilderment of a Sunday afternoon congregation in a country church on a four-point circuit in Pennsylvania where the pastor, fresh from seminary, was trying to impress on his farmer-parishioners the importance of rising for the reading of the Gospel and bowing when approaching the altar. (With considerable craftsmanship, he had fashioned the altar with his own hands.) Yet these rural Methodists were hardly more taken aback than were some of the delegates from overseas at the extreme length and formal character of the liturgical services which opened the sessions of the Methodist Ecumenical Conference at Springfield three years ago.

Along with this change in the outward aspect of Protestant churches and this formalization of their services there has gone an equally marked change in Protestant preaching. Evangelical fervor has steadily declined

in most pulpits of the "leading" denominations—again with the exception of the South. Expository preaching, of the sort general in the days when every preacher's study showed a shelf filled with Alexander Maclaren and the Expositor's Bible, is seldom encountered nowadays. The "acids of modernity" have bitten deep into preacher and hearer, and the result is a kind of preaching which, at its best, is in direct descent from the ethical insights of the Old Testament prophets, but which too often is diluted from that into something perilously akin to that careful moralism against which the Evangelical Revival revolted.

Here is one place—the pulpit—in which the higher criticism has indubitably left its mark. Scholarship has given the church a more majestic and more penetrating Bible. Today's preacher, when he is steeped in the contributions of this scholarship, can call on resources of religious insight and history which few American preachers commanded at the century's turn. The battle which raged over the nature of inspiration and of the Bible clear down to the time when Dr. Fosdick was forced to leave a Presbyterian pulpit in New York, vindicated the right of the well-prepared Christian minister to preach to a generation obsessed with the belief that all approaches must be "scientific." Yet it would be foolish to close one's eyes to the fact that in some respects the effect of the critical study of the Bible has been to make preaching more difficult.

Let me try to make the point clear with an illustration. At the turn of the century a Kansas clergyman, Charles M. Sheldon, wrote a tract in the form of a novel which is said to have sold more copies than any other book ever written in America. I would not derogate in the slightest the good I am sure *In His Steps* has done. The whole point of that book, however, was that life's problems of conduct would yield to an immediate and satisfying solution if a single question were asked: "What would Jesus do?" Dr. Sheldon was so confident he had the key in that formula that he even tried to apply it to the editing of a daily newspaper!

There are many earnest preachers who will appeal to that same formula today. But they are not the ones who are aware of what scholarship has done to "the search for the historical Jesus," or who feel under compulsion to deal honestly with their congregations in the light of such scholarly developments. What *would* Jesus do—about war, or about unearned increment, or about birth control? Who knows? The Christian minister of course continues to find his supreme revelation of the nature of God and the meaning of life in Jesus Christ the Lord, whom he must continue to approach by the avenue of the Bible. He knows that scholar-

ship no longer forces him to what Tillich has called the nihilistic conclusions at which Schweitzer arrived in 1910. But what he finds in the Bible now is primarily the revelation of a spirit, not of a code or of literally transcribed and historically attested precepts.

One reflection of this difficulty in which the pulpit has found itself during these fifty years as an effect of scholarly research may be seen in the struggle over the social gospel. The social gospel was Protestantism's reflection of the mood of the Theodore Roosevelt-Woodrow Wilson reforming period. Granted that a literalistic interpretation of the biblical text had become impossible, there was still the great vision of a Kingdom of God to be established among men, in the pursuit of which men and societies might sublimate their selfish shortcomings and rise to new greatness and holiness. The optimism of that prospect, which for a time made "challenge" the most overworked word in the pulpit's vocabulary, produced some thrilling preaching about the time the Bull Moosers stormed the polls singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers."

That was the period when Walter Rauschenbusch brought forth a number of impressive works of religious sociology, a mind-stirring approach to a "social" theology, and a little bundle of prayers which should enrich the devotional life of the church for generations. But the coming of the era of world wars ended the belief that the road to the establishment of the Kingdom of God among men was as clear or as short as many had believed when they embraced the social gospel as a preachable gospel. The history of American Protestantism in this half-century could almost be written as an essay on the rise and decline of Walter Rauschenbusch. (I expect that, tempered by the thought of that other and later German exile, Paul Tillich, Rauschenbusch will rise again.)

As the half-century closes, the effect of its tragic revelation of the depths of depravity to which human conduct can sink has been so profound that preaching is swinging back to emphasize man's innate sinfulness, his inability to escape from the dilemma of doing evil when he would do good, the narrow limitations which circumscribe his attempts to experience personal holiness, and the illusory nature of any dream of corporate holiness he may cherish. One must be impressed by the spiritual concern with which this neo-orthodoxy—to use a familiar tag—is being taught in some seminaries and preached in some pulpits. Many of its insights are profoundly true and as profoundly disturbing. Yet one wonders how long the Protestant pulpit can hold the attention of contemporary man in his appalling predicament if it continues to preach only on Romans 7:19, and never gets

beyond that to at least an occasional sermon on John 3:16 or the parable of the Prodigal Son. No gospel, I am convinced, can maintain itself unless it is a gospel that can be preached. And a gospel which has no salvation to offer either man or men, except by some possible act of grace in an experience that is outside history, is not a gospel that can be preached—at least, not for long.

IV

In looking back across these fifty years one is struck by what has happened to Christian missions. The turn of the century found American Protestantism just rising to the full onrush of the foreign missionary crusade. The martyrdoms of the Boxer rebellion in China in 1900 evoked an emotional response which swept the American churches. John R. Mott and Robert E. Speer became towering figures in church conventions. The Laymen's Missionary Movement and the Student Volunteer Movement broke out almost spontaneously, and instantly commanded immense resources of life and wealth. Huge congregations thrilled to the singing of such hymns as:

From all the dark places
Of earth's heathen races,
O see how the thick shadows fly!¹

Facing great maps, on which the world was shown as a mottled pattern in black and white, those who were sure they lived in the white spots acknowledged their responsibility to see that the black spots were turned white. It was to be "the evangelization of the world in this generation."

What has happened to that missionary enthusiasm with which the century opened? Many things, of which I can suggest only a few. Comparative religions, now a regular study in practically all theological seminaries and most church colleges, and frequently a part of church-school curriculums, has forced those black-and-white maps into storage. The revelation of the paganism, the brutality, the downright wickedness of the "Christian" West has undermined the confidence essential to missionary success. The end of the era of colonialism has so altered the conditions under which the white, western, unnaturalized missionary must work on most fields that neither he nor the board commissioning him is any longer sure his presence is an asset to the total enterprise of developing an indigenous Christian church and culture.

The rise of a rival missionary movement, Communism, with a fanatical

¹ For an illustration of the changing thought of the period, see the bowdlerized version of these lines in the most recent revision of *The Methodist Hymnal*.

belief in itself as the true church and in its Marxist gospel as the only way of salvation, has frequently left Christian missionaries—handicapped by their identification with what is now denounced as the imperialistic West—confused and at a loss for an effective counter. For these and other reasons, a Protestantism which still acknowledges the authority of the missionary commission, finds itself, at this mid-century mark, asking what the nature of the missionary task can be in much of the world under the conditions now obtaining.

These fifty years have seen a new emphasis on the importance of Christian nurture. Religious education has been recognized as the need of every child. More time, thought, and substance have been devoted to this cause than ever before. Yet in this field of increased effort likewise, the results have satisfied no one. There is a tendency in some quarters to throw the blame on the exclusion of religious teaching from the public schools, in apparent unawareness that in the European countries where religious instruction is a part of the school curriculum, results have been quite as disappointing. Many religious educators, looking more deeply into the problem, are reaching the conclusion that no courses of instruction, whether in public or in church schools, can successfully mold the young unless and until the whole family makes the task of Christian nurture its ceaseless responsibility. But there remains a long road to be traveled before, in most congregations, any such responsibility is acknowledged and discharged.

V

One development of the half-century has been so important that it must be given a section of its own. This is the growth of the ecumenical movement. After the Vatican Council of 1870, which fastened the dogma of papal infallibility on the Roman Catholic Church, hope for an inclusive reunion of Christendom virtually vanished. But as the papal Church went its separate way, marking its departure from the main stream of Christian history by its rapid promulgation of such dogmas as the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of the Virgin, Protestantism began to draw together. To be sure, fissiparous tendencies continued in this country—and to a lesser degree elsewhere—to give rise to new sects. But the centripetal has proved stronger than the centrifugal influence during this period with which we are concerned.

A growing awareness of the inability of divided and often rival churches to make any adequate impression on the nature of contemporary civilization produced the movement toward unity in action which reached what is so

far its high point at Amsterdam in 1948. Significantly, the original impulse came largely from mission fields. The folly of church divisions when facing the unevangelized hordes of Asia and Africa led to the Edinburgh Conference of 1910. After that followed a procession of conferences, running through Stockholm, Lausanne, Jerusalem, Oxford, Edinburgh, and Madras, and culminating at the Amsterdam gathering in which the World Council of Churches was established.

Paralleling this development on a world scale has gone the growth of councils of churches, or national Christian councils, in a large number of countries. Of these the most influential has undoubtedly been the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America—a federation formed in 1908 which transcended national boundaries by including the United Church of Canada. Now, as 1950 closes, this impulse to close ranks for the sake of concerted action is bringing about the formation of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., a body which will fuse into one functional organization the co-ordinated Protestant effort previously sought by eight interdenominational bodies operating in different fields.

But co-operation in action will not permanently satisfy those who seek organic union of the now divided parts of Protestantism. The push toward such union has made its influence felt in various ways during the half-century. In the United States it has been largely confined to efforts to achieve the union, or reunion, of churches of a common origin holding a common system of government and body of doctrine. Methodist reunion, consummated in 1939 after years of negotiation, has been by far the most conspicuous achievement of this sort. Efforts to bring together communions with differing historical backgrounds, differing polities, and possibly differing theologies have not made much headway. A period of blazing courtship between the Northern Presbyterians and Episcopalians—with some confusion as to just who was courting whom—ended in a cooling-off period which seems now to have passed into the deep-freeze stage. A plan for union of the Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Church (a church in the presbyterian tradition) has collapsed, at least for the present, under circumstances so distressing as to dampen the spirit of union advocates in all the churches.

But the formation of the United Church of Canada and of the Church of South India—the latter a union in which Anglicans have joined—has shown that there is nothing intrinsically insoluble in the problem of a divided Protestantism. E. Stanley Jones has crowded auditoriums all over America for the past five years as he pleaded for a federal union of

denominations. And as the half-century ends, Bishop Ivan Lee Holt of the Methodist Church announces that at least eight communions with a total membership of more than twenty million will send delegates to a conference at Cincinnati in the first month of the new year, at which a plan will be presented for the organic union of any and all denominations that now recognize each other's sacraments and ministries.

What the next fifty years may hold, no man can foresee. But the ecumenical spirit has become a reality in Protestantism's life here and around the world, and the crusade to end needless and debilitating divisions marches on.

VI

My allotted space is almost gone, and I have yet to speak of some of the most difficult problems for the church involved in what Dr. Trueblood calls the modern predicament,—problems which existed when the century opened but in no such dimensions as they have now attained. Some of these are so evident that they need only be mentioned. There is, for instance, the growing power of organized labor and the difficulty which a predominantly middle-class Protestantism is experiencing in coming to terms with it. There is the race issue—more exigent now than ever, as world tension between colored peoples and whites increases and the United States essays a new role of world leadership. There is the challenge of war, both to the churches and to the individual Christian. With modern war as indescribably destructive as it is, both materially and spiritually, all the efforts of the theologians to find some principle of a just war by which to guide Christians seem doomed to failure. (That was the warning of Amsterdam.) Yet an attempt to extricate the individual from participation in the operations of a war-making society appears equally futile.

Let me briefly direct attention to one other problem, perhaps for the churches the most important and up to now most unrecognized of all. I have in mind the conception of the nature of man in the light of developing theories of psychiatry. American churches of 1900 were not so much as aware of the existence of Dr. Sigmund Freud; those of 1950 cannot avoid him. Dr. Freud dismissed religion as "an illusion." Many psychiatric schools today—those of Jung and Adler in particular—would not go that far. But the basic concept of the psychiatrist, that man is the creature of a subconscious which begins to form within him from the hour of conception (possibly earlier), and that this bears directly on any conception of moral responsibility—all this makes the pastor, as he reads the numberless books which are supposed to help him with his "counseling," wonder whether

he should not install a psychoanalyst's couch on the spot where the evangelical churches once had a mourner's bench.

Typical of the attitude of many leading psychiatrists is this quotation, given in a review of a book published during this week in which I write, *Speaking of Man*, by Dr. Abraham Myerson. Dr. Myerson until his recent death stood at the very top of his profession as a member of the Harvard medical faculty. He does not hesitate to differ violently from the conclusions of Freud. But when he speaks of religion it is in such terms as these: "I shall continue to reject revelation and the evolved theology of professional religionists until it becomes normal and *not* schizophrenic to hear and see God and the angels. . . . That which was holy in less critical times has become psychiatric in our day." Only last week I noticed that the organized psychiatrists of Sweden had made a formal protest to the Royal Medical Society of that kingdom against a confirmation manual of the Church of Sweden which, they charged, is likely to do infinite damage to the psyche of young Swedes.

It is easy to smile at this, or to grow indignant. But the problem is very real for churches attempting the cure of souls in a society whose members are increasingly aware of the moral alibi offered them by the psychologist. Hand in hand with this goes the added alibi offered by the anthropologist, with his insistence on the relativity of all moral standards, and his concomitant undermining of belief in a universally valid moral law.

What are the churches to say to these newly defined problems which concern the nature of man? They are just beginning to see, as the half-century ends, how vital it is that they should formulate an answer. They have not yet done so, at least not in terms which carry conviction to the growing multitude to whom absolutes are a fantasy and volition a sort of grim joke played on man by his subconscious.

VII

Statistically, these fifty years have seen an impressive growth in the churches which make up American Protestantism. The value of property held must be many times what it was in 1900; figures of church membership never seem to me to mean much, though I accept the claim that Protestant membership is growing at a faster rate than the population and now contains a larger proportion of the American people than ever before. These things argue a considerable vigor in Protestant church organizations. They likewise speak a good word for America's free church system, for they cannot be duplicated in any country, so far as I know, where there is an establishment.

However, the real promise for the churches as the second half of the century opens does not lie in their statistics but in the assurance, coming from too many quarters to be shrugged off, of a spiritual hunger felt by increasing numbers of all sorts and conditions of men. We cannot deal with the causes which have produced this; it is the fact which counts. How is the church to respond? The Roman Church, with its proffer of an authoritative dogma to end all questions, while the welcoming arms of Mother Church provide a haven for the storm-tossed soul, can reach a few. But in the aggregate they are very few. What response, then, has Protestantism to make?

It can tell these spiritually hungry ones to read the Bible and to pray, but most of them won't. It can tell them to "follow Christ," but most of them will ask, "How?" It can tell them to repent of their sins and fling themselves on the mercy of God. But either they will deny responsibility for their sins or they will ask, "How do I repent?" Schweitzer repents of being a white man by going to Africa as a medical missionary. A company of Alabama Quakers repent of their share in the operations of a war-making society by selling their fertile farms and going to the jungles of armyless Costa Rica. The son of a multimillionaire whom I know tries to repent of what he considers sharing in the spoils of a rapacious industrial order by going to work anonymously in a co-op. (Which he presently leaves because he thinks he finds as ruthless a struggle for power there.) Perhaps this is as baffling a problem as any the churches now face—telling man who would be moral in an immoral society how he goes about repenting for his share in the immoralities of that society.

Then what, as we reach this mid-century mark, is Protestantism's best hope? First, I should say the increasing disillusionment felt by vast numbers of men with the false god of Science, and their growing belief in the necessity for a spiritual interpretation of life. Even a Bertrand Russell is reported as telling a university audience that "the philosophy of human power being suggested by the triumphs of science may, if unchecked, inspire a form of unwisdom from which disastrous consequences may result." Second, man's hunger for truth and his endless search for it. Third, the inherent capacity of Protestantism for self-criticism and reform. And most of all, the persistent attraction which Jesus exerts as the revelation of the nature of God, in whom we live and move and have our being, and hence who is for us Ultimate Reality.

Religious Thought in Great Britain, 1900-1950

E. L. ALLEN

FIFTY YEARS OF THEOLOGY might without difficulty be brought under the rubric: *the retreat from liberalism*. How close the relation is between the spiritual life and social and political conditions becomes clear at once. For might not the same language be used of the secular history of the period? True, the liberal spirit, as distinct from any party and its programme, has proved more virile in Great Britain than on the Continent, so that the shock of two great wars has not disposed its people to truckle to tyranny. But there is such a thing as the exception which proves the rule, and the over-all picture of the half-century remains one of large-scale surrender to authority, till at times it seems today as though Rome and Moscow emerge as the ultimate rivals. In theology as in politics there has been a return to positions which at the beginning of our period were thought to have been abandoned for ever. Indeed, the process has gone so far that argument is no longer needed: it is sufficient to brand someone as "liberal" and his conclusions as "humanist" to discredit them.

In what follows I shall illustrate this retreat from liberalism by reference to some outstanding events and personalities of the period, and shall select some three points for fuller consideration.

I

There was a moment in the first decade of this century when it seemed as though the Roman Catholic Church might be induced to abandon its tradition of intransigence and come to terms with the modern world. Democracy, science, and biblical criticism knocked at the same time at the door of the Vatican and demanded admission. While the most brilliant of the leaders of Catholic Modernism was the Frenchman Loisy, the most romantic was the Irishman Tyrrell, and the most enduring in his influence the cosmopolitan von Hügel. Of these, only the last two concern ourselves. Tyrrell was excommunicated in 1907 and died in the following year. He had added contumely to heresy, since he had dared to appeal from the

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Pope to the British public through the medium of the *Times* correspondence columns. In *Christianity at the Crossroads* (1909) he argued that the apocalyptic Christ found in the Gospels by modern scholarship lives on in the Catholic, rather than the Protestant, tradition. Von Hügel died in the communion of the Church, after a life whose influence had extended far beyond it. Whatever may be the fate of other books written in the time of controversy, his will speak to men's minds and hearts for a while yet.

The Church of England had its Modernist movement at the same time, though there is little evidence of any connection between the two. Episcopal displeasure has from time to time been meted out to this, but the thunders of excommunication have not been wielded. One of the bishops most concerned for purity of doctrine was Charles Gore, who was himself at first under suspicion for his contribution to the symposium *Lux Mundi* (1889). He crossed swords with Hastings Rashdall, an able scholar but perhaps too much of a rationalist. Even more serious was the furore which arose around the nomination of Hensley Henson, then Dean of Durham, to the vacant see of Hereford. The two men were opposed over the issues raised by the conference of missionaries at Kikuyu in 1913, at which two Anglican bishops actually took part in a united service held in a Presbyterian church. It was indeed a period of confusion for the Church of England, when episcopal authority was endeavoring to maintain itself against the vagaries of extreme ritualism and at the same time to provide the leadership needed to meet a rapidly changing social situation. And now the modernists seemed bent on adding to its difficulties.

But perhaps the sorriest episode of all was that of the so-called "New Theology," forever associated with the name of R. J. Campbell, the sensitive and eloquent minister of the City Temple, London. It is perhaps more charitable to fasten the blame for the controversy in question upon the press, eager for any sensation which would expand its sales, than upon Campbell himself. Later, however, he readily admitted that he had been injudicious and hasty in the composition and publication of the book *The New Theology* (1907). It had at least one good result, in that it made religion the subject of popular interest and discussion, as was not to be the case again till the debates in the Commons on the proposed revision of the Book of Common Prayer. At once a group of ardent young men in the Free Churches declared themselves Campbell's disciples, though the general reaction was a hostile one. The most noted of his followers, W. E. Orchard, found his way, *via* an odd syncretism of his own manufacture to which he gave the name "Free Catholicism," to Rome. Campbell himself

returned to his earlier allegiance and was ordained to the Anglican priesthood, largely under the influence of Gore.

It must not be supposed, of course, that modernism died in the first World War, though the Roman form of it was forced to surrender by a severe application of Papal discipline. In the event, Rome proved to be wiser than her critics. They supposed that she would only survive as she came to terms with the modern world; the day was soon to come when her defiance of the modern world would be one of the main sources of her attraction for a generation which had lost its secular idealisms. In the Church of England, there was room even on the episcopal bench for the *enfant terrible* of Modernism, and Bishop Barnes's hasty appropriation of some novel but quite unsubstantiated theories in his *Rise of Christianity*¹ brought as little credit to the cause he championed as to the Church leaders who condemned him in language which suggested reaction rather than reason. Work of much greater value was done by C. E. Raven, while within the Free Churches C. J. Cadoux brought a meticulously exact scholarship and a zest in controversy to the defense of Liberal Protestantism. The latter is unhappily no longer with us, but we look forward to the Gifford Lectures of the former for what an original and singularly well-equipped thinker will be able to give.

So hasty a sketch as this might leave on the uninformed the impression that the first fifteen or twenty years of the century were marked simply by controversy, and that mainly of an ephemeral character. Let me very briefly seek to correct this. One whose work is still of importance has already been mentioned. There are at least three other names which deserve to be added to that of von Hügel. The first is that of John Oman, whose *Grace and Personality* (1917) richly deserves the epithet "classical." The position there taken up is one which may well need to be improved upon, but it is unlikely that it will ever be abandoned. Oman's insistence upon the personal and ethical character of God's grace has come to stay. The same might be said of P. T. Forsyth's masterpiece, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ* (1909).² There is today a remarkable revival of interest in Forsyth, and, while an exaggerated value is set upon some of his other books, this is probably the most important contribution to Christology in the English language. That judgment is not lightly passed. The third name is that of Dean Inge, perhaps the most interesting personality of our period, but not the easiest to appreciate. With something of the mystic about him

¹ Longmans, Green & Company, 1947.

² New edition, London: Independent Press, 1947.

and something of the scientist, he came to be thought of by many as a journalist whose popularity rested on the felicity with which he could say the unpopular thing. He was more than that. He was that enigma, a disciple of Plotinus in the pulpit of St. Paul's.

II

Perhaps the most important characteristic of the new turn taken by theology since the first World War is the emphasis on *the Bible*. A reviewer wishing to commend a theological book might have said at one time that it seeks to meet the demands of the modern mind; he is more likely today to stress that it does justice to the biblical data. This return to a biblical theology is not peculiar to any one section of the Church; it is noticeable among Roman Catholics as well as Protestants. An Anglo-Catholic like Father Thornton occupies common ground in this respect with the Congregationalist, Principal Hubert Cunliffe-Jones, whose book *The Authority of the Biblical Revelation*³ aims at providing a theoretical basis for the new development. This rediscovery of the Bible is due, of course, in no small measure to Barth and Brunner, and it is significant that the translator of Barth's *Romans*, Sir Edwyn Hoskyns, was also joint author with Francis Noel Davey of one of the most influential books in this field, *The Riddle of the New Testament*.⁴ Its argument, stated in a sentence, is that all lines of study, literary criticism, historical analysis, etc., converge in the end upon a point, the figure of Jesus Christ as one who constrains the student to a personal decision, to faith or unbelief.

The work of Barth and Brunner would have been much less influential had it not been for the support it received from the Confessional Church in Germany and its heroic witness in face of Nazi interference in the work of the Church. Refugee pastors were welcomed in Britain and aroused congregations by their simple appeal to the Bible and their fidelity to it under great strain. It became clear that the civilization of an earlier day, in which spiritual values were so firmly established that the scholar was free to treat the Bible as though it were merely an interesting survival from the ancient world, had gone forever. Instead of it had come a regime of brutality, contempt for human life, and idol-worship, so that the prophetic denunciation of these things suddenly became as relevant as the latest news bulletin. The return to the Bible brought with it a new sense of freedom and power, as well as an enlargement of the intellectual and spiritual horizon.

³ London: James Clarke & Co., 1946.

⁴ London: Faber & Faber, 1931. Harcourt Brace & Co., 1932.

For again and again, when appealed to, the Bible showed itself more penetrating, more robust, and more adequate to modern conditions, than any alternative.

One of the most significant changes was in the picture of Jesus drawn by the New Testament scholar and taken over from him by the systematic theologian. At the beginning of the century, Harnack's *What Is Christianity?* (1901) thrust eschatology into the background and concentrated attention upon ethics. T. R. Glover's *Jesus of History* (1916)⁵ had an equal, perhaps greater, appeal to ministers and students, and had the advantage of a prefatory commendation by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The revelation of God was to be found in the human qualities of Jesus, and the Man of Nazareth was at last accessible to us after centuries of misunderstanding. But within a decade of the publication of Glover's book it was being urged that "the quest of the historical Jesus" was foredoomed to failure, that our choice is between the Christ of apostolic faith and sheer skepticism. Where no such defeatist spirit prevailed, the results of historical investigation sometimes reversed those of liberal scholars. For C. H. Dodd, for example, eschatology was central in the message of Jesus, and his work made current the new slogan "realized eschatology." The Kingdom of God came in the ministry of Jesus, he himself is therefore central to it, and the Christological interest of the Church is justified.

There were other consequences of the new attitude to the Bible, some of very doubtful value. There was even a certain revival of Fundamentalism: a university teacher of theology with a bias toward verbal inspiration was still no doubt a rare bird, but such did exist. Indeed, however decidedly the neo-orthodox theologian might assert that he accepted the results of historical criticism as applied to the Bible, he often in fact used it as though it were a storehouse of secret information on the supernatural world. What many learned from Barth was not any precise doctrine of Scripture, transcending orthodoxy and fundamentalism alike, but simply a fresh conviction of the authority of the Bible, and therefore of one's own authority, if one could but find support for it there. Again, while allegorical interpretation was never allowed by British theologians to run to such excesses as those associated on the Continent with the name of Wilhelm Vischer, the fact that it was thought worth while to translate his first volume into English in 1949 showed what attractions this new, and old, method of exegesis had for some. The work of A. G. Hebert is evidence enough in this connection.

⁵ Reprinted by Harper & Brothers, 1950.

III

From this return to the Bible in theology we pass naturally to the renewed emphasis on *the Church*. It was, of course, in the Free Churches that the change was most marked. Whereas at the opening of the century the piety of the Free Churches was markedly individualist in contrast to that of the Church of England, long before the halfway mark had been reached books like R. Newton Flew's *Jesus and His Church*⁶ showed the concern of a Methodist to root the church in the very beginning of Christianity. In his lectures on *Christian Doctrine*⁷ J. S. Whale vindicated for Congregationalism a high doctrine of the church, citing Calvin to justify his argument. The younger men in the Free Churches made use of such terms as "Catholic" and "traditional" that had long been out of favor in such quarters, and one item in liturgical experiments was the recital of the Apostles' Creed in public worship. For a brief period the "Free Catholicism" of the King's Weigh House gave extravagant expression to the new tendencies, but W. E. Orchard's transfer of his allegiance to Rome could not fail to stultify the movement, too unnatural in any case to enjoy much vitality.

Perhaps one factor making for the new interest in the church was the full entry by non-Anglicans upon the social and political equality with members of the Established Church which was now theirs by right. Their emancipation was signalized by the preference for the term "Free Churches" as against "Nonconformity," and a certain assimilation to the Church of England was almost bound to follow. Another influence was the ecumenical movement, which brought into the open the issues over which the churches were most gravely divided and forced attention upon these. Discussion across national and denominational frontiers reveal that, after agreement had been reached on many points of doctrine, irreconcilable differences remained on the church, the ministry, and the sacraments. A further consequence of the ecumenical movement may be noted here. It brought British Christians into touch with forms of Christian worship and faith with which hitherto they had been unfamiliar. Russian exiles mediated a knowledge of the Orthodox Church, and the Fellowship of St. Sergius and St. Alban was formed to promote closer relations between it and the Church of England. Swedish theology, too, began to be known and appreciated.

Debate on the church soon made it clear that there was least agreement on the subject of the ministry, that while necessities of church organization, combined with the new social status of Free Churchmen, might make them

⁶ London: Epworth Press, 1938. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1938.

⁷ The Macmillan Company, 1941.

less hostile to episcopacy as a form of government, apostolic succession was no less repugnant to them than to their fathers. Especially on the Anglican side, in what was undoubtedly a sincere attempt to promote unity, attempt after attempt was made to marshal learning, rabbinic as well as patristic, to support the doctrine. The symposium, *The Apostolic Ministry*,⁸ edited by the Bishop of Oxford, was perhaps the most formidable of all such efforts. T. W. Manson's brief reply *The Church's Ministry*⁹ was written from the Presbyterian point of view and with the impending Lambeth Conference in mind. Perhaps the most persuasive and irenic piece of writing was that by A. M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*.¹⁰ In a time when scholarship was ceasing to be denominational and there was genuine concern for mutual understanding, controversy could no longer be bitter, though it did not cease to be decided when the occasion required.

In the discussion on the sacraments the situation was more fluid. The Baptist position came to be taken much more seriously than ever before. Karl Barth's criticism of infant baptism only confirmed what was happening in the minds of many. It was thus possible for an Anglo-Catholic to affirm that the practice of his Church in this respect could not be justified from the New Testament. The opposite position was championed by W. F. Flemington in his *New Testament Doctrine of Baptism*,¹¹ but the argument limped at times and had to be supported by conjecture. A novel feature was introduced into the discussion with the suggestion that "Christian initiation" was originally a whole that had only reached us in a broken form, with the separated rites of baptism and confirmation as parts. The loss to the church of large masses of the urban population detached baptism from its earlier setting and made of it a mere social convention, sometimes semisuperstitious, for which parents were still eager but which the clergy were less disposed to grant. The practical problems which thus arose called for a rethinking of the nature of baptism. On the Eucharist it will suffice to say that there was no small measure of *rapprochement* as the Free Churches advanced beyond the purely commemorative conception of the rite and the Anglo-Catholics drew away from any suggestion of materialism.

IV

Another important and characteristic feature of British theology during the period under review was its increasing *social concern*. The old political alignments, in virtue of which it could be assumed that an Anglican would

⁸ Kirk, K. E., ed. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1946.

⁹ London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1948.

¹⁰ Longmans, Green and Co., 1936.

¹¹ London: S. P. C. K. House, 1948.

vote Conservative and a Nonconformist Liberal, wholly lost their validity. With the rise of the Labor Party, bishops joined hands with the working class in its struggle for opportunity, and wealthy Free Churchmen began to move steadily to the Right. In the economic distress and spiritual confusion of the interwar period there was a demand for new leadership, based on principle rather than expediency, and an attempt to provide this from the side of the Church. It was a national loss of the first magnitude when William Temple died at the height of his power and influence. There was something delightfully new and indubitably timely in his forthright and vigorously Christian judgments on events of the day. His following extended far outside the churches and his example encouraged a host of smaller men. But we are not concerned here with the conferences and practical activities which attest the growth of a social conscience, but solely with its reflection in theology.

At this point some reference must be made to two men who were as eagerly read in Britain as in their own countries, the American Reinhold Niebuhr and the Frenchman Jacques Maritain. The former transformed the whole situation for many by his bold advocacy of an unheard-of alliance between theological orthodoxy and political radicalism. His *Interpretation of Christian Ethics*¹² came to such with the force almost of a revelation. They did not apparently notice that he was challenging what had for generations been axiomatic in the political ethic of the Free Churches, that the moral law is binding upon nations as upon individuals. Jacques Maritain's *True Humanism*¹³ showed what Marxism has to teach the Catholic. Frank in admission of the Church's mistakes in the past and generous in its acceptance as allies of any who will stand firm for the dignity and rights of personality, there is yet nothing in the book to sanction the vagaries of a few extremists who openly flirted with Communism, the most notorious among them being the "Red Dean." Each of these two men sought to revivify Christian thought by linking it up with the movements and demands of the time, as also to direct political action by specifically Christian insights.

Anglo-Catholicism especially addressed itself to the task of constructing a Christian sociology, the members of the "Christendom" group being peculiarly active. Names such as Maurice Reckitt, V. A. Demant, and Dorothy Sayers come to the mind at once. Incidentally, it was one of the curious features of the period that theology was never more acceptable than when written by the laity. One suspects indeed that many a vicarage

¹² Harper & Brothers, 1935. London: S. C. M. Press, 1936.

¹³ Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938.

and manse library had a much better representation of Dorothy Sayers and C. S. Lewis on its shelves than of Barth or Brunner! But this is to digress. The Christian sociologists to whom reference has just been made were attracted at one time by the Social Credit scheme of Major Douglas. Their critics were apt to accuse them of hankering after a restoration of the medieval system. But in fact the necessities of war and postwar rationing and controls led to something very like the "Just Price" of the medieval economists! A more apt criticism would be that with them and with others the effort to establish theological presuppositions for political action was sometimes rather forced: the premises were perhaps reached later than the conclusion.

In Scotland George MacLeod made a name for himself by the venture of the Iona Community, which attracted to it the interest and allegiance of not a few among the younger men in the ministry of the English Free Churches as well as from the Church of Scotland. Its association of "liturgy and society" was in accordance with the prevailing temper. There is indeed an intimate connection between the rediscovery of the Church as the Body of Christ and the emphasis on community, between sacramental worship and the effort to win back the possibility of a consecration of daily work, between the idea of the redeemed society and the challenge to redeem society. Biblical study provided its quota also, for, thanks to the work particularly of H. Wheeler Robinson, the category of "corporate personality" became the key which unlocked many doors in the New Testament as well as the Old Testament. Whether the collectivism of the time, the absorption of the individual in the mass, is in part responsible for the closer association between theology and social action, is a question which has not been adequately considered. If so there is a danger that the reaction from individualism may prove in the end as unhealthy as that individualism itself ever was.

V

With this we approach our conclusion. Can we take stock of the changes that have been recorded and of the many which considerations of space forbid us to record, and so decide how far they have brought with them gain and how far loss? It would seem clear that the pendulum has swung too far and that there were values in liberalism which we discard at our peril. Indeed, is it not high time for our neo-orthodox friends to admit that the Bible to which they appeal is not the Bible of the church's age-long tradition but the Bible as recast by the criticism of the last century, with the prophets given priority over the law and the Pauline literature dated

before the Synoptists even? We must accept what liberalism has handed on to us even when we disown our debt to it. There are not as many indications as one would wish to see of a new development, an effort after synthesis, but there are such. The work of John Baillie and of Herbert Farmer is important in this connection. The latter is a disciple of Oman with philosophical interests perhaps predominant, and less in touch with Continental thought than the former. Baillie's *Our Knowledge of God*¹⁴ takes sides with Brunner against Barth in an admirable combination of Scots learning and humor.

One might hope for assistance from philosophy, but that also has changed into something quite different from what it once was. With the passing of Whitehead and A. E. Taylor philosophy has lost its former certainties; the status of personality has become questionable and the eternal values begin to look like pathetic human creations. Logical positivism has found a new and adroit way of satisfying man's spiritual hunger. We are assured that God neither is nor is not, that all statements about him are so much nonsense. The man who has a conscience need not follow it, at least not farther than to the door of the nearest psychoanalyst. The existentialism of the Continent is too little known as yet to be able to do much for us. Kierkegaard is in danger of being monopolized by the theologians, though Barth has long since dropped him as his pilot. The nihilism of Heidegger and Sartre is far better known among us than the robust and uncompromisingly ethical thinking of Jaspers. In the judgment of the present writer, the revitalizing of our theology might well come from the assimilation of much that Jaspers has to offer. But the time for that is apparently not yet.

Meanwhile, we can see that a distinction must be established between the liberal spirit as such and certain conclusions at which liberal theologians arrived in the course of the last century. Liberalism gave us an understanding of Hebrew prophecy by which we lived in the dark and evil times of war. It forced upon us a recognition of the full humanity of Jesus which can never now be abandoned. It gave us a sense of God's work as accomplished in the sweep and march of history, though it did at times confound the divine purpose in history with the events which sustain it, concealing even while they reveal. It taught us the privilege of freedom and the duty of being honest with the Bible and with the tradition in which we ourselves stand. It warned us against the besetting sin of the theologian,

¹⁴ Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939.

rampant again in our day, the sin of special pleading, of fixing one's conclusions first and finding one's arguments afterwards. For all this we should remain grateful to it and be willing still to learn from it.

On the other hand, neo-orthodoxy has taught us much. We have learned from it that revelation is not just a longer word for religion, that it stands for something objective, given, something that we only find because it first finds us. We have learned from it to appreciate the tragic element in human life, that while God is love, his love is a fiery judgment on all that is loveless and evil. Guilt and sin, these old words can now be put into use again: we understand only too well what they mean, for we have had dreadful teachers. And we have learned the value of tradition, of a corporate life that goes down the ages and gives stability to our individual lives while they are on the earth for a brief period. Can we not see that there is truth in both positions and go on to seek that new form of truth that will transcend, even while it unites, both? To be sure, such a new form of truth will not be final, it too will be time-bound and conditioned by circumstances, for all the thinking and the writing of the theologian fall under the ultimate and inescapable judgment: "The workman made it, it is not God." But we shall be able to live and act by it as he requires.

The Bible in the World Council of Churches

G. ERNEST WRIGHT

THE STUDY DEPARTMENT of the World Council of Churches, in planning for the Assembly of 1953, has placed the subject of "The Bible and the Church's Message to the World" at the head of its agenda, which also includes the subjects of evangelism and Christian action in society. A planning conference was held at Wadham College, Oxford, England, during the summer of 1949. Some eighteen scholars were in attendance in the Biblical Inquiry, eight of whom were professional biblical teachers. Seven of the men were from Great Britain, four were from the United States, two from Switzerland, two from Germany, and one each from India, Japan, and Sweden.

From the outset of the discussions the meeting followed the general pattern of earlier biblical conferences at London and Bossey,¹ in the sense that the conversation and argument were diffuse and scattered, turning in several different directions at the same time. Numerous preliminary questions bogged the group down completely, with the result that we got precisely nowhere and a number of the men became very discouraged. Dr. Visser't Hooft came into the meeting on the second day and in a polite but unmistakably firm way scolded the group for attempting to solve all theological questions of the World Church before getting down to the specific issue placed before the commission, that of the actual biblical message in social and political affairs. Some of us in the group were convinced, however, that there was a far greater measure of agreement among the participants than the heterogeneous and undisciplined discussion might indicate.

To test the area of agreement we turned to a consideration of a specific biblical passage (Jer. 7:1-15), at the suggestion of Professor Walther Eichrodt, the world's foremost authority in the field of Old Testament

¹ See the report of these two conferences published by the World Council under the title, *From the Bible to the Modern World* (1947).

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Theology. He gave the basic exposition of the passage as he felt it should be done by a Christian who believes in the unity of the Bible and in its authoritative relevance for our day. He was followed by three others who were to indicate how they would differ in interpretative procedure. After this session was over, the air had immediately cleared, for the only major differences revealed were in individual insight and in application to the modern situation, not in interpretative methodology.

A drafting committee was then formed to prepare a document which would set these agreements in writing. The result was the statement concerning the "Guiding Principles for the Interpretation of the Bible," a document which was revised by the whole group almost word by word. It is on this statement that the editors of this Journal have asked me to comment. As to its significance, one can only say that for centuries the churches have been dividing and subdividing on the issues here considered. For the first time in history, as far as I am aware, a representative group of churchmen has met on an ecumenical basis and tried to reach a consensus on one of the most critical issues facing the church. Yet in such a document one should not look for something spectacular, brilliant, or completely new. It is impossible for group discussion to produce that type of thing. Consequently, any significance which the statement possesses must be evaluated in the light of what could and could not be agreed upon and what still remains to be considered.²

I

The first major section of the document attempts to list seven "necessary theological presuppositions of biblical interpretation." This is a reaction against the older view, still held by some, that the ideal interpreter is one who is completely neutral and objective. Such objectivity does not exist; the interpreter of any document brings to it a whole set of categories which determine his point of view and make him what he is. A Christian interpreter of Scripture in particular not only possesses presuppositions drawn from the culture of the age in which he lives, but as a Christian he must of necessity possess certain specific opinions concerning the Bible, else he will not interpret it as a member of the church of Christ. These opinions must be set down at the outset, while presuppositions drawn from areas other than the Bible and the church must constantly be held up for examination and criticism. Consequently, the first Article (A) of Section I states that

² A pamphlet entitled "The Bible and the Church's Message" contains the text of the document and can be obtained from the World Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. The text has also been printed in *The Ecumenical Review*, Vol. II, No. 1 (Autumn, 1949), pp. 81-86; and *Interpretation*, Vol. III, No. 4 (October, 1949), pp. 457-459.

"the Bible is our common starting point, for there God's Word confronts us, a Word which humbles the hearers so that they are more ready to listen and to discuss than they are to assert their own opinions." In other words, the Christian interpreter begins his work with an attitude of reverent respect toward the Bible, for he is convinced that while his authority lies in the Will of God, yet "the Bible stands in a unique position in mediating that Will to us." Furthermore, his right of private interpretation has a limitation in the fact, as Article C puts it, that his starting point "lies within the redeemed community of which by faith he is a member." His private right is disciplined and channeled by the faith he professes in the church.

What does this faith have to do with the Christian's understanding of the message and contents of the Bible? Is the Bible primarily a book of spiritual values and ethical teachings? Articles B, D, and E affirm the contrary. One sentence on which the group spent considerable time was the first in Article B: "It is agreed that the primary message of the Bible concerns God's gracious and redemptive activity for the saving of sinful man that he might create in Jesus Christ a people for himself." This is an excellent summary of the central content of the Bible; but what does it imply, first, regarding the ethical teachings of the Scripture for our own time and, second, regarding the unity of the Bible?

The remainder of Article B attempts to state the authority of biblical ethics, though there was a great deal of debate upon the matter and considerable difficulty encountered in finding the precise words on which all could agree. In the primary message of the Bible an authoritative claim is placed on man "to respond in faith and obedience throughout the whole of his life and work." But what is the authority of biblical law? All agreed that in certain primary laws, in particular the law of love, we are given something that is absolutely binding because "in it we encounter the inescapable Will of God." But the Bible also contains many specific laws for the detailed organization of the life of a people who lived under conditions very different from our own. This is true in the Old Testament especially, but many of the detailed instructions of the Apostles to the churches in the New Testament writings would also fall under this category. Many major divisions in the churches have been caused or, at least, heightened by the disagreement over what to take seriously (e.g., the position of women, the covering of their hair, ecclesiastical orders, the Sabbath, etc.).

All the group could bring itself to say in this instance is that "we should through reverent and serious study seek to distinguish in the light of God's revelation in Christ the permanently binding from that of purely

local and temporal significance." Some in the group would have liked to say more: e.g., that all biblical law was the Word of God to people then and served its role as such. Consequently, it must be examined seriously, especially for the principles lying behind it, though specific formulations are not necessarily binding upon us except as illustrations of what was then done and of how we must act in our time. Others, particularly the Orthodox, are of course doubtful as to whether any social or political program at all can be derived for the world from biblical law.

As regards the unity of the Bible, it was agreed that "the center and goal of the whole Bible is Jesus Christ" who is to be seen "both as the fulfillment and the end of the law" (Article D). This means that the unity of the Bible "is not to be found in any naturalistic development" (i.e. in the nineteenth-century view of the Scripture as the gradual discovery, on the part of a people, of true values and conceptions of God in the evolving historical process), "nor in any static identity" (i.e. in the allegorical discovery of Christian truth in all parts of the Old Testament). Rather the unity exists "in the ongoing redemptive activity of God in the history of one people, reaching its fulfillment in Christ" (Article E). But what does this mean for the interpretation of specific passages in the Old Testament? Article E continues: "Accordingly it is of decisive importance for hermeneutical method to interpret the Old Testament in the light of the total revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, from which arises the full Trinitarian faith of the Church."

This statement is certainly by no means as clear as one could wish! It thus reveals the fact of a considerable discussion behind it, particularly at the Zetten conference in 1948. It is concerned with the whole problem of the Christological exegesis of the Old Testament. If Christ is the center of the Bible, then the neutral Old Testament research of the last century which has presumed to carry on its interpretative work with little reference to him at all is certainly wrong. On the other hand, Christian interpreters throughout Christian history frequently have distorted the Old Testament by finding in every stick and stone an allusion to Christ. This also is wrong. Thus the references in the above statement to "the *total revelation* in the person of Jesus Christ," whence arises "the *full Trinitarian faith*" are attempting to point to a larger context and a wider definition of what "Christological" exegesis is.

A few at least in the group, among them this writer, would prefer to abandon the conception of "Christological" exegesis entirely in favor of a "Trinitarian" exegesis. Not that the doctrine of the Trinity is to be found

in the Old Testament, but that this doctrine provides the clue to interpretation and prevents the oversimplification involved in the term "Christological." As the doctrine of the Trinity reveals a complexity in the Godhead, so also it necessitates a complexity in exegetical method. Thus God the Father and God the Holy Spirit may speak in parts of Scripture where the Son is not explicitly present, even though all exegesis will ultimately lead us to the Son. Others in the group did not wish to abandon the term "Christological," though they would certainly interpret it in Trinitarian terms, the difference largely being one of the use and definition of words for the same general point of view.

Since this is the case, all "allegorical interpretations which were not intended by the biblical authors are arbitrary and their use may be a disservice" (Article F). There is, however, a limited use of typology which is admissible because it is to be found in the record itself. Hence "Christian exegesis has been justified in recognizing as divinely established a certain correspondence between some events and teachings of the Old and of the New Testament." The Exodus deliverance from slavery, for example, is a type of (i.e., it prefigures and points toward) the redemption from evil effected by Christ—because the New Testament so considers it and we may assume the correspondence between the events to be divinely established. Finally, no matter how much we may differ in the manner in which we accord value to tradition, reason and natural law, all were agreed that "any teaching that clearly contradicts the biblical position cannot be accepted as Christian" (Article G). This statement would probably be interpreted somewhat differently by the different participants, but we should note that what is meant is not any and every specific teaching in either the Old or the New Testaments, but the *essential biblical* position on fundamental questions of the gospel and of its ethical teaching.

II

The second main section of the document has to do with "the interpretation of a specific passage." In the light of the above presuppositions how does a Christian proceed to the exposition of a particular section of the Bible? The first Article (A) affirms that we must begin with a historical and critical examination of the passage. We cannot turn our backs upon the research of the last two hundred years but we must use every fact and scientific methodology available. In the case of an Old Testament passage (Article B), it must be examined in relation to the literature of Israel both before and after its time, and then in relation to the New

Testament in order to see it in its total biblical context. In so doing "the Old Testament passage may receive limitation and correction, and it may also disclose in the light of the New Testament a new and more profound significance, unknown to the original writer." Similarly with a New Testament passage it must be examined in its own context and then in the light of "its background in God's former revelation." When this is done "our understanding of a New Testament passage may be deepened through our apprehension of the Old" (Article C).

As one example of the procedure here involved, we may examine briefly the passage used in the group discussion, Jer. 7:1-15.³ This is a portion of Jeremiah's "Temple Sermon," evidently delivered in the court of the Temple "in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim" (i.e. ca. 608 B.C.; cf. Jer. 26:1). The great empire of Assyria, which for nearly three centuries had ruled, or attempted to rule, the whole area from Persia to Egypt, had just fallen. Everywhere there was turmoil, excitement, and the resurgence of national independence. But the good king Josiah had just been killed in battle while trying to halt the Egyptian attempt to re-establish its Asiatic empire. The "people of the land" had placed their favorite among Josiah's sons upon the throne, but the Pharaoh had taken him captive to Egypt and put the tyrannical Jehoiakim on the throne in his place (II Kings 23:29-37). Was the people's ardent hope for independence and security now completely in vain?

It seems evident that the religious leaders had seized upon this moment to renew their appeal for wholehearted participation in the temple service. They gave the people a watchword to provide them with a sense of security. It was "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord" (vs. 4). God was in his holy temple; he would not desert his people nor let it be moved. Had not the temple been threatened in Isaiah's time; had not Isaiah called his people to faith and trust; and had not both temple and people been saved? (II Kings 19; Isa. 37).

This call to the temple was deceptively sincere and it is not unlike the current summons to the church that civilization may be saved and our safety secured. Yet Jeremiah calls it a lying word. The nature of his address is in the common prophetic form of a legal indictment; God as both King and Judge renders an indictment and a sentence as might be done in a courtroom. Vss. 3-4 form the introductory warning and summary of the case; vss. 5-11 present the detailed indictment; vss. 12-15 give the sen-

³ For Professor Eichrodt's exposition, see his article in *Theology Today*, Vol. VII, No. 1 (April, 1950), pp. 15-25.

tence. To Jeremiah security, "dwelling in this place," cannot be gained by any external seals, nor by the assumption that the election promises of God are eternally valid and unalterable. Security was promised only to an obedient people, and it will be taken away when the covenantal vows are violated. The common life of this people is characterized by gross social and corporate sin. The temple actually has been made into a cave or hiding place where robbers hide (vs. 11). Consequently, this temple will be destroyed as was the sanctuary at Shiloh in the time of Samuel, and the people will be dispersed, deprived of all political independence (vss. 14-15).

Jeremiah's presuppositions here are those of the whole of the Old Testament. God is the active Judge and Lord of this world. The nation that flagrantly violates his law, even the elect nation, will be judged even to the destruction of both the nation as a political entity and its religious worship centered in the temple. In order to see the wider significance of this viewpoint it is important to put it in its total ancient setting. This Word of God strikes at the heart of every supposition and inclination of the natural man. In the contemporary pagan religions the whole aim of existence was the integration of nature, society, the state, and the cult. State and cult were the mainstays of social security; if these were destroyed, nothing remained except chaos and disorder. But here God demands an absolute obedience, and he will destroy every security in nature and society, even state and temple, when these normal supports of the human race are used idolatrously, as substitutes for the true security which rests in him alone.

The harshness and sharpness of the reaction to Jeremiah's address indicates how deeply rooted the Israelite religious leaders were in this idolatry (26:10 ff.). In the New Testament we encounter the same issue and the same sensitivity over the question of the temple. Jesus' attack on it and his belief that what God was accomplishing through him was greater than the temple aroused the religious authorities to a fever of anger (cf. Matt. 12:6; 24:2; 26:61). In other words, we are dealing here with a truly biblical issue of such significance that the church must assuredly apply it to our day, though to do so likewise would arouse opposition. Normal securities so easily become idolatrous, as, for example, a particular economic system, political party, state or ecclesiastical system. All can be used, the last mentioned no less than the others, to lessen the tension between God and ourselves and to further the desire to separate religion and the common life, especially in the social and political spheres.

There are a number of other important biblical issues raised by this passage, but the above remarks must here suffice. The analysis of the pas-

sage in its temporal context and in its total background leads one to see the real questions at issue and, when the New Testament is studied, the same Word of God is to be found. On this point, the teaching of the two Testaments is the same. In other cases, the teaching of the Old Testament may be revised or refined, as in the conception of the Messiah and the problem of national aggrandizement; and it may also be given a deeper dimension unknown to the original writer, as in the instance of Isa. 53. On the other hand, the interpretation of a New Testament passage may be deepened by a knowledge of Israel's doctrines of creation, of man, of righteousness, of the covenant, of the Kingdom, of history, etc. In other words, every specific passage must be seen in the light of the Bible as a whole before we can be sure that we have grasped the central meaning which we must apply to our own time.

IV

The third major section of the document has to do with a different type of interpretive problem, that of "the discovery of the biblical teaching on a specific social or political issue." In this case, we bring a modern problem to the Bible and seek to learn the scriptural teaching concerning it. This section, like the second, has three articles. The first, Article A, asserts that we must begin with a direct study of the biblical text in relation to the given problem, "otherwise the general principles which we establish will reflect more the presuppositions of our own time than the message of the Bible." This statement was directed against certain examples of procedure which were before the group in which the arguments were derived from the general principles of Christian anthropology and not from an inductive study of the biblical text. But how have these general principles been established? It is here affirmed that we must begin inductively; we must listen to what the Bible has to say specifically before we establish any generalizations from which we may "safely deduce applications to our own situation."

Secondly, it was agreed (Article B) that we should begin, as a general rule, with the New Testament teaching and then move back into the Old Testament in order to view the given problem in the light of God's total revelation. In doing so, however, historical differences must not be overlooked, "otherwise the amassing of various texts may be done in too facile a manner and the Bible made to present a united witness on a topic which in fact it does not do." This statement was also written in opposition to certain documents set before the committee, in which the procedure verged

very closely on the old static, proof-text methodology here emphatically rejected. "Furthermore, care should be used to see the correct proportions so that too much emphasis may not be placed on a single passage and the correct biblical perspective be lost."

Article C proved to be one of the most difficult in the document to formulate. It has to do with the relation between eschatology and ethics. We finally had to give up the attempt to say anything concretely and simply state that our conference had not had time to explore the question, though considerable discussion of it can be found in the brochure noted above in footnote 1. It was agreed that "the biblical teaching on social and political issues must be viewed in the light of the tension between life in the kingdoms of this world and participation in the Kingdom of God." The scriptural teaching of the two ages, therefore, "has an important bearing upon the way in which a specific social or political issue is to be interpreted." But no attempt was made to state what that bearing is.

An example used at the Zetten conference in 1948 may illustrate what is involved in this section. That is the biblical teaching on divorce. Without attempting to examine all biblical passages which bear on this subject, we touch only on certain texts which highlight the procedure and the problems involved. In accordance with Article B we begin with the New Testament, Mark 10:2-9. When Jesus is asked about divorce, he quotes as authoritative references Gen. 1:27 and 2:24, while the law of Deut. 24:1-4 was given, he says, because of "your hardness of heart." Turning to the Old Testament, we observe that Israel made no radical changes in Near Eastern marriage practices. Marriage was a civil affair, a contract between two families. The practice of polygamy was taken for granted by the law, though several narratives depict the family dissension and problems that it caused. In the Old Testament as a whole it is Gen. 2:24 which causes most astonishment. It has no parallel in the whole ancient world. The writer has been led by his reflection on the meaning of God's creation of male and female to break radically with ancient custom and to see that monogamy was the institution established by God in the order of creation. Similarly, Malachi for theological reasons roundly condemns divorce as something which God hates because it is a violation of a sacred covenant (Mal. 2:14-16).

It is to this background of theological principle, rather than to social custom, that Jesus appealed. The law of Deut. 24:1-4, which permits divorce, was an accommodation to human imperfection. The true law is to

be inferred from Gen. 2:24, whence Jesus concludes in the spirit of Malachi: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." In other words, divorce is wrong and remarriage is adultery (Mk. 10:9-12). Now is this law of Christ to be interpreted as a *juridical* law which *governs* all people who live in the old age of sin and compromise, as in ancient Israel? Does it not rather *describe* the true relation of men in the New Age, the Kingdom of God? How can it be made operative in the old age, in this present pagan world? If we interpret the law as meant for courtroom use in this age, we shall be forced to posit exceptions. Nearly all scholars agree that the early church tried to use it in this way, and thus in Matt. 5:32 and 19:9 softened the primary prohibition by adding the exception of adultery.

In the modern age both the Roman Catholic and the Anglican Churches have taken this law juridically, the former resting its case on Mk. 10, the latter permitting divorce in the case of adultery on the basis of Matthew. In both cases innumerable difficulties have been encountered with the result that the whole question has been seriously restudied in the Anglican and Episcopal Churches, while the Roman Catholic practice of annulment, instituted as a casuistic attempt to deal with actual situations and still keep within the framework of the law, is scarcely a convincing or successful effort to keep the spirit of the command of Jesus. When the law which he gave is used juridically in the old age, it actually becomes a means of sin and compromise, precisely as the Apostle Paul claimed that the law of the old age did. Consequently, most non-Roman churches proclaim the truth of Jesus' teaching, but at the same time they do not feel in position to forbid divorce entirely in the world as it is.

The situation of the church is thus somewhat parallel to the old and new ages of the Bible. The church exists in both ages at the same time. Consequently, our juridical laws like those of Israel are adjusted at least in some measure to the actualities of the situation in which people find themselves. Yet the church is also the Body of Christ, witnessing to the Kingdom that is present now among a remnant, though yet to be consummated in its glory. In this kingdom the law of love binds all members together in Christ, and the special concern of the church must be with this kingdom because there has been revealed to us the will of God that the whole creation must one day find its true life in the condition that the law describes. And inasmuch as we are removed from that kingdom we stand under God's judgment and in dire need of his grace.

V

The above illustration concerning divorce brings us to the fourth and last major section of the document, that concerned with "the application of the biblical message to the modern world." It is at this point that the interpretations within the group began to diverge the most widely. One major problem of application is that mentioned in Article A. There it is affirmed that we must be cautious in interpreting Scripture for our day because absolute identity of situation is never found. History never repeats itself in quite the same way. Consequently, care must be exercised to "discover the degree to which our particular situation is similar to that which the Bible presents" when we seek to apply the social and political teaching of the latter to our time. Nevertheless, we are assured of the guidance of the Holy Spirit who will lead us by means of the Bible to a knowledge of the Will of God.

Article B deals with one of the most debated problems in the discussions. Was the teaching of Jer. 7:1-15, for example, directed solely to the church, or does it provide the Word of God for the whole world? The Orthodox churches in particular affirm strongly that the social and political message of the Bible is relevant solely for the members of the redeemed community, the church. Thus far complete agreement on this issue has been impossible to achieve. The statement in this document attempts to form a bridge between the various views on this matter, though it is a question as to how widely in the Ecumenical Movement it may be received: "It is agreed that the Bible speaks primarily to the Church, but it also speaks through the Church to the world inasmuch as the whole world is claimed by the Church's Lord. The Church can best speak to the world by becoming the Church remade by the Word of God."

Why do the applications of the biblical message diverge so widely? Article C says that it is "because of differing doctrinal and ecclesiastical traditions, differing ethical, political, and cultural outlooks, differing geographical and sociological situations, differing temperaments and gifts." The document concludes, however, in the same spirit in which it began: It is "an actual experience within the Ecumenical Movement, that when we meet together, with presuppositions of which we may be largely unconscious, and bring these presuppositions to the judgment of Scripture, some of the very difficulties are removed which prevent the gospel from being heard. Thus the Bible itself leads us back to the living Word of God."

The Mystery of Baptism

PAUL S. MINEAR

DURING THE PAST GENERATION there has been in American Christianity a dearth of interest in the doctrine and practice of baptism. There were once heated arguments over the relative merits of immersion and sprinkling, and over the legitimacy of infant baptism. In fact, the debates over such issues were prominent among the ostensible causes for the splintering of American denominations. The heat has been dissipated, and few of us regret the cooler temperatures. We recall the interminable wrangling, the theological hair-splitting, the long chains of biblical proof texts, the specious rationalizations of inherited prejudices, and we are grateful that baptism has ceased to provoke civil war within Protestantism.

The changed situation is no doubt due to various underground influences. Many have simply developed an allergy for this type of controversy. Others have been impressed by the futility of the debate, having observed how few people really shift their allegiance under the pressure of theological or biblical considerations. Some have recognized that there is too much truth in all of the basic traditions to claim absolute validity for any separatist tradition. Historical studies have made it increasingly difficult for any modern denomination to claim a straight line of ancestry connecting its practice to the New Testament norms. Indeed, these same studies have raised questions whether a single norm exists in the New Testament, and whether, if it does exist, modern practice should be determined by that norm. More important, perhaps, current conceptions of the gospel and of the church have been so chaotic that it has been impossible to maintain a clear-cut doctrine of the sacraments. Church members are so confused or so unimpressed by what happens in baptism that they have been quite unconcerned about how this sacrament is celebrated.

Whatever may be the reasons for their apathy, it is clear that the American churches are now witnessing a resurgence of the ancient issues. This resurgence is most apparent in the older and in the younger churches, i.e., in Europe and in Asia. If it were left to the personal or denominational

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tastes of American Christians, the issue might well remain dormant. But the cardinal issues are today being selected by "the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church." It is this Church, through its ecumenical discussions, that detects unsuspected dangers to its health. And during the past decade, it has been moving rapidly into new territory of thought and action, where all issues are seen in new terms.

This Church is coming to see that the doctrine and practice of baptism are far more relevant to the renewal of the church than many Americans have supposed. Each step forward in understanding the gospel has enhanced the significance of what God does in baptizing men with water and the Spirit. Each step forward has indicated that a careless and slipshod observance of the sacraments bespeaks a basic misunderstanding of the gospel. The recovery of the genuine Christian witness brings with it new appreciations of the significance of baptism in the God-given mission of the church. This revived concern for baptism, however, is more than a return to the *status quo ante*, and more than a flaring up of denominational spites. The discussion is proceeding in a new context, which may be attributed to at least five major developments.

THE NEW CONTEXT

First may be mentioned the influence of the mission field and of our closer contacts with it. The experience of the younger churches is well summarized by Bishop Stephen C. Neill:

The real significance of baptism is much more fully understood by the convert, and even by the non-Christian, where the Church stands over against a non-Christian faith and manner of life. The non-Christian system is a totality. It does not on the whole concern itself greatly with the inner beliefs and convictions of the individual, but it lays its hand on every aspect of his activity in the family and society. It can tolerate interest in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and even the profession of inner faith in him. But baptism is the great and tragic reality. It involves the rejection of one totality and acceptance of another. It puts the individual beyond the possibility of compromise. He has died to the old in order to embrace the new."¹

We often hear today the truism that every country in the world, including America, is a mission field. But one corollary has gone virtually unobserved: when American Christians actually begin to view their situation as a mission opportunity, then baptism will again be seen to mark the great divide between the world and the church. And when this happens there will be greater opposition to baptism from the outside and greater concern from the inside. On a true mission field, what Paul says about baptism in Romans 6:1-11 becomes both intelligible and necessary.

¹ *Man's Disorder and God's Design*. Harper & Brothers, 1949, Vol. I, p. 117.

A second factor in reorientation is the emerging vision of the structure and purposes of the church's life. In each of the papers presented at Amsterdam on the nature of the church, baptism is included as essential to the church, as an important sign of its unity. Once this position is taken, the actual practice of baptism becomes an evidence of the church's disunity. The inability of members of the one Church to share together in the Eucharist is a more obvious scandal, because the Eucharist is celebrated at each ecumenical conference. But the lack of recognition of one baptism is inherently a scandal of the same order, even though it is less apparent. That rift becomes visible in an implicit form whenever a baptism is celebrated. The act of baptism is or should be an act of the one Church. It is no longer, therefore, a matter on which any local congregation or any single denomination may consider its verdict to be final. The motive of defending its practice against that of another denomination must be transcended by an eager listening to the mind of the whole Church. Any individual who wishes to discuss the forms of baptism must deal with the life of the *Una Sancta*. This altered context gives new dimensions to the divergent views.

A third factor in reorientation is the new theocentricity in the church's thinking. What takes place in baptism is to be described first of all in terms of God's purpose and activity, a purpose that transcends the ideas, feelings, and methods which individuals or congregations may hold in observing the sacrament. Because this rite is a true sacrament for which the Trinitarian formula is used, the central reality is the fact that God is active in this event as Creator and Father, that Jesus Christ is here demonstrating his power and his love, that the Holy Spirit is here transferring a man from the kingdoms of this world into the kingdom of our Lord. Christians are today called to think about all things from within the perspective of a God-centered, Christ-centered, Spirit-centered, church-centered faith. This effort serves to draw baptism back within the circle of the contemporaneous work of Christ, who alone can give new life to men.

The changed context may be attributed, in the fourth place, to the radical changes in biblical studies since the last tempest over baptism. There are new ways of listening to the Bible, of interpreting each passage, and of relating each text to the central message. With the concentration on the *kerygma* has come an enhanced appreciation of biblical eschatology and pneumatology. Historians have furnished clearer and more accurate pictures of the ecclesiastical developments in the first century, with the varieties of organization and liturgical practice. All of these have affected both the content and the direction of current thinking on the meaning of the sacraments.

In the fifth place, one needs to remember the effects of the modern liturgical revival. So far this revival has been most visible in the concern for greater dignity and appropriateness in the regular Sunday liturgy. Less attention has thus far been given to the hasty and unfelicitous ways in which the sacrament of baptism is administered. But Christian leaders are becoming aware that the usual treatment of this event is even less defensible than the customary celebration of the Eucharist. At any rate, the church is coming to view baptism as a pivotal episode in the tremendous drama of salvation, as a climactic moment in the tragic and redemptive saga, as a sign by which the church points to its central mystery. This new context should give to contemporary discussions a tone different from that which characterized earlier sectarian bickerings.

THE NEW CONTROVERSY

Within this changed orientation a new and important debate is taking shape, and it is well for American Christians to participate in that debate. Participation, however, presupposes a certain degree of understanding of the issues. We must first acquaint ourselves with the outlines of controversy where it has gained the greatest momentum—that is, in Europe. Let the old harangues and fruitless animosities stay buried. But let us take part, according to the grace that has been given to us, in the task set before the church, that of making its observance of this sacrament more consonant with its gospel, its worship and its mission.

One method of studying the current situation is to review the positions of two able and informed antagonists whose personal controversy epitomizes the wider discussion. Let us take Karl Barth and Oscar Cullmann, the one a theologian, the other a New Testament exegete. Both teach at the same school in Basel. Each seeks to be faithful above all to the New Testament revelation. Each has a high regard for the other's statement of the case. Barth's statement has been translated under the title *The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*.² Cullmann's reply has been translated under the title *Baptism in the New Testament*.³

It is impossible, of course, to give an adequate digest of the arguments of these two representatives, but one can try to indicate the major points of agreement and disagreement. Their agreements aptly represent the new perspectives of a majority of recent writers; their disagreements indicate areas where vigorous discussion may be expected during the next

² London, S. C. M. Press, 1948.

³ London, S. C. M. Press, 1950.

decade. Both writers spend most of their time in grasping aright the mystery of the Church. Both see in baptism and its forms an expression of the mysterious activity of God in his baptizing of men, through Christ, with his Holy Spirit.

It must be noted that neither Barth nor Cullmann attempts to decide such a question as infant baptism simply by determining the practice of the New Testament church. They recognize the ambiguity of the evidence and its lack of finality. Nor does either scholar accept the doctrine that the *behavior* of the earliest churches should be accepted as a final norm. They agree that all attitudes toward infant baptism must be grounded in the whole doctrine regarding baptism in the New Testament, and that all of these attitudes must be consistent with every constituent in Christian faith. They refuse to separate the meaning of infant and adult baptisms, so that one might deal with them as two sacraments rather than one. What is essential in one must be equally essential in the other. Neither will tolerate any easy separation of the human act of baptizing from the whole range of God's plan of salvation. Neither approves the consideration of baptism as a moment or act that is isolated from the earlier or later life of the person being baptized. Both recognize that present practice is in many cases unjustified and irregular, but neither would endorse the rebaptism of those whose first baptism is considered to be faulty. In agreeing on these points they eliminate many of the factors that have made previous controversies so futile.

But now let us move to what seem to be the three most strategic areas: (1) the relation of a person's baptism to Jesus' baptism; (2) the relation of the sacrament to the eschatological reality of the new age; (3) the significance of baptism in the life of the church as a whole.

I

When a person is baptized, notice is thereby given that he has shared in the death and resurrection of Jesus, as described by Paul in Romans 6. Baptism is "a free word and deed of Jesus Christ himself" ⁴ who declares that this person belongs to him. The basic event in which Jesus took possession of this disciple was in his death *on Golgotha*. Jesus' own baptism was a baptism unto death and life from the dead (Luke 12:50). On Golgotha, in this baptism of the Messiah, all men have already been baptized. The *real death* and *real life* of every individual begins there.⁵ When the church

⁴ Barth, Karl, *The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*, p. 15.

⁵ Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 11. Cullmann, Oscar, *Baptism in the New Testament*, p. 13f.

baptizes an individual, this human act is embraced within that crowning miracle wherein God ushered in the new age, bestowing his Spirit on Jesus and through him on all who belong to him. When the church baptizes an individual we may not say that this miracle is repeated, but we may say that its power is manifested afresh in the acceptance of this individual into the Body of Christ. In this sense, the sacrament is an acted parable of what God has done through Christ. So far we find consensus.

Barth believes that, according to the New Testament, participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus requires an acceptance of obligation on the part of the individual being baptized. His baptism is a miracle, an act of prevenient grace, an act manifesting his total dependence upon the work of Christ, but he must recognize what has been done for him. Christ, in his love for a man, calls forth from him penitence, a movement of the will, a spoken decision. This faith is not, of course, a cause of salvation, but a recognition of it.⁶

Cullmann, on the other hand, infers that this act of prevenient grace was completed while man was totally passive. "It belongs to the essence of this general baptism, effected by Jesus, that it is entirely independent of the resolution, of the faith and understanding of those who undertake it, whom it benefits." "We were already baptized on Golgotha, without our act, even without our faith."⁷ The two scholars thus raise the problem of how baptism and faith are related to each other, or, more precisely, how we are to speak of the *passivity* of faith. For both scholars, baptism marks a total dependence upon what Christ has done.

Death is a mark of passivity, since we *die* with Christ. But what sort of passivity is this: the passivity of one who consciously accepts and wills this death (and its symbol, baptism), or the passivity of one not yet alive, one who is as yet unconscious of death or its meaning? Does death with Christ involve the dependence of the fully penitent believer, or the dependence of a child who obviously can have no thought about what such death may mean? It is Barth who insists that sound exegesis requires that the one baptized should be an *active partner* in what has been done for him, and no merely passive instrument.⁸

II

The New Testament views the death and resurrection of Jesus as a final event, as the central event in that end-time wherein God is reconciling

⁶ Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 27f.

⁷ Cullmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 20, 23. The translation of these sentences is mine.

⁸ Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

the world to himself. This episode of history derives its meaning from the whole movement of sacred history, and all other history finds meaning only in the light of this salvation-epic. The event of baptism is the moment when account is taken of a person's place in this drama of salvation; it is a sign by which the church gives its witness to that same drama. Through death and resurrection, the Holy Spirit descends to earth, giving to men a share in the life of the new age. Baptism is on the one hand *a participation in what happened on Calvary and a sign of that event*; on the other hand, it is *an anticipation of what will happen on Jesus' return and a sign of that event*. It introduces men into the company of those who live between the first victory and the final victory; it represents the contemporaneous extension of Pentecost and the contemporaneous proclamation of the Messiah's coming to judge the quick and the dead. As a mark of the advent of the new age in the midst of the old, it makes known the fact that here and now Christ has subjected all the rulers of darkness, transferring the baptized one from Satan's kingdom to his own; simultaneously, it proclaims that this victory will be manifested to all the world when Christ comes again. Baptism thus points to Christ as the center of all history, and points to the work of the Holy Spirit now as ever blowing freely where it wills. So far there is consensus.

Barth places the greater accent upon baptism as an *anticipation* of the coming victory.⁹ It is the sign of the acceptance of a supreme obligation, the call for faith to become perfect, for passing now through the final fire of judgment, for the sons of God now to fulfill their sonship. It points to the end of history only if in this event the church rededicates itself to the one task of preparing for the return of the Lord. Its meaning is lost unless it is constantly viewed by church and by believer as one of the signs of Christ's appearing. Barth complains that the church has been too much concerned to fix a minimum rather than a maximum standard for correct observance, to make the road wider than Jesus himself made it, to be content with innocuous symbols that do not shadow forth the extremely critical character of what happens.¹⁰ Does the church in administering baptism manifest itself as a true church, wholly concerned with Christ's mysterious judgment on itself? Is it being renewed by the very Spirit which it invokes on the baptized? If it does not make an effort to secure the responsible willingness and readiness of the baptized person to receive the pledge of grace directed toward himself, it is guilty of wounding the body of Christ.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 62f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

Cullmann places the accent upon the *past*, upon Christ as the center of history now, upon Pentecost rather than Parousia.¹¹ To him, Pentecost was a collective baptism of the church as a whole, making individual baptism for those first believers unnecessary. Since Pentecost the church has used the sacrament of baptism to extend the benefits of Pentecost to individuals one by one.¹² Baptism *does nothing to hasten the end*; it is intended for the period between resurrection and parousia as a sign of the centrality of Christ now. During this period the Spirit is free to blow where it will, but for that very reason it would be a sign of little faith to deny that the Spirit can or does come to the infants whom the church accepts for baptism. Through accepting a child, the church proclaims that Christ has already become Lord of this child, and this proclamation is all the more significant if the candidate is infant rather than adult. Barth, on the contrary, accuses the church of limiting, by its baptizing of infants, the freedom of the Spirit to call and assemble the Church as the Spirit wills.¹³

III

Every event of worship on the part of the congregation is an eschatological event, an event of incarnation, atonement, and victory. Baptism is one form that this mysterious transaction takes. It is an event in which the whole church participates; apart from a praying congregation baptism is inconceivable. "In principle baptism cannot be celebrated as a private act or a family festival."¹⁴ Every baptism is a confession of faith on the part of the congregation; it is a cry of victory over principalities and powers of the old age; it is a deed of recognizing an individual's inclusion in the Body of Christ—his crucified body and his resurrected body. Like all other events in church life, it is a means of proclaiming the gospel and glorifying God. So far there seems to be consensus. But how is baptism related to the church as the Body of Christ?

Here Cullmann takes the aggressive. The church is the place in human history where the Holy Spirit is active, where Christ's lordship is manifested. Where the Spirit is, there also is the power to draw an infant into Christ's kingdom. By baptism, a church recognizes that a child has been so drawn. Like marriage, *baptism is a function of the earthly life of the church. Birth into a Christian family is sufficient to draw one within the*

¹¹ Cullmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-41.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹³ Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

realm of collective holiness. In this holiness the family participates as a family. Christianity is a new covenant, and its status as a covenant makes some of its institutions analogous to the institutions of the old covenant. Baptism of Christians is analogous to the baptism of Israel at the Red Sea, including infants; it is analogous to the practice of circumcision; it is a mark of the solidarity of this new Israel as a people of God; it is an indication that all aspects of the life of this community, including especially its children, are embraced within the one Body.¹⁵ The New Testament, says Cullmann, protested against circumcision not because it was administered to infants, but because as a valid seal of God's election which had come before circumcision, it was not *followed* by the faith to which circumcision was a seal.¹⁶

If faith must be guaranteed *at the moment* of baptism, not only are unnecessary restrictions placed upon the life of this Body, but adult baptism is also endangered, for who can measure the degree of faith present in an individual at the moment of baptism, or in the minister who officiates, or in the praying congregation? To require a necessary minimum of faith would be a sign of lack of faith on the part of the congregation. The New Testament faith is stronger, because it assumes that one's family is sanctified through one's faith. It tells stories of how people were healed by Christ, not through their own faith, but through the faith and prayers of others. The requirement of faith in the person baptized may thus be due to lack of faith.

Here, of course, Barth refuses to follow Cullmann. He does not see much sense in speaking of a quantitative extension of the Body of Christ. He recognizes that Paul speaks of Israel as being baptized in the Red Sea, but he stresses the fact that the motive for such a reference is to warn *adult* Christians and not to authorize infant baptism. Barth also recognizes that one's family is sanctified through one's faith, but he does not see why this sanctification through natural ties should require baptism as a special sign.¹⁷ He stresses the fact that the church of the New Testament is a confessional church, not a folk-church and much less a state-church. It is not analogous at this point to Israel according to the flesh. Here Cullmann agrees, but insists that what makes it a confessional church is not its doctrine of baptism; the retention of its confessional character does not therefore require the denial of infant baptism.¹⁸

¹⁵ Cullmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-46.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 66f.

¹⁷ Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

¹⁸ Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 27f.

CONCLUSION

Let me report, before concluding, that both scholars are equally insistent in holding that baptism does not so much confer a privilege as fix a responsibility. Unless faith follows and completes the act of baptism, unless baptism is in truth a pledge of later union with Christ in the whole range of thought, will, and deed, then to be baptized is a very great danger indeed. It leaves an indelible mark, however deficient may have been the form in the first instance, and however completely a person may have forgotten his own baptism. If faith does not follow, then the latter state is worse than the former. By this standard alone most of our churches and most of us as baptized Christians should stand in fear and trembling. Thus Barth, after delivering the broadside against current practices, places the immediate responsibility on the shoulders of those who have already been baptized. "No Christian," he writes, "is so good a Christian that his understanding and experience of the fulness of the grace that is his in baptism could correspond other than distantly to the reality." "One will be best employed in clearing the circumference of his own faith and life, not that of others."¹⁹

Barth's motive in raising the problem—which for him represents an attack upon his own denomination and upon his patron saint John Calvin—is not to impugn the legitimacy of the baptism of others. It is simply to remind the church that it must seek to make the visible human ceremony a more effective and appropriate witness to the act of God within which the human deed occurs. The form of the sacrament should correspond as adequately as possible to the divine-human mystery which it proclaims. It should be a fitting symbol of the death and resurrection of Jesus for our sakes, of our personal transition from Good Friday to Easter morning, of the final history which has been inaugurated, of the mysterious inclusion of the Church in the miracle of divine grace. The only power in baptism is that which comes from the free purpose and presence of Jesus Christ.

One final word to indicate the basically irenic and interdenominational character of the new debate. Both Barth and Cullmann open the way, though not explicitly, for even such "low-church" practices as that of the Quakers. Cullmann discovers that in the New Testament period there is no evidence that children of Christian parents, born after the conversion of those parents, were baptized either as infants or as adults.²⁰ And Barth

¹⁹ Barth, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 60.

²⁰ Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

stresses the power of Christ to baptize those who have received *no visible baptism* from the congregation or those whose baptism was greatly deficient. The necessity of the human ceremony, he makes clear, is not that of an indispensable medium of salvation, but that of a command which the church has received from its Lord.²¹

It is because of this deeply rooted trust in the free movement of the Holy Spirit that contemporary discussions hold a promise of advancing the renewal and unification of the church. Only the presence of the Holy Spirit can save the sacrament from magic; only this presence can save it from becoming a meaningless routine. That is to say, when baptism ceases to point beyond itself to the mystery of divine salvation, it ceases to be Christian.

²¹ Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

The Preacher as a Pastor of Men's Minds

With Some Consideration of Existentialism

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

GILBERT HIGHET'S startlingly vital and vivid book *The Art of Teaching*¹ is now being read by teachers everywhere. It ought to be read also by preachers everywhere. For the preacher too is a teacher. And all of Gilbert Highet's subtle understanding of the relation of the teacher and the taught is of the utmost importance to the man who must speak to men's minds, if in a noble sense he would rouse their emotions and command their wills.

I. THE ATTACK ON THE MIND

To be sure, the alert preacher will be aware that he lives in a world and at a time when the mind is subject to all sorts of attack. He may regard this as an excuse for lessening his own intellectual activity. If the mind as an organ for the apprehension of truth has been discredited, why not forego the attempt to address men through their intelligence, and give oneself entirely to the discussion of those practical problems of the good life which lie immediately at hand? Or going a little more deeply into the matter, if vital experience is so much more important than thought about it, as Kierkegaard and the existentialists (who have taken a leaf from him and then have written their own books in their own way) would say—why not become the vehicle of a vivid expression of those vitalities which become commanding in experience, and turn away from the hard and demanding business of intellectual analysis? If a profound study reveals the fact that the mind tends to harden into scholasticism or to surrender to betraying abstractions, why not turn from the use of an instrument which is so easily subject to intellectual confusion? If at last life must have the right of way in spite of logic, why not discard the logic?

¹ Alfred A. Knopf, 1950.

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So we have countless pulpits where the sermons never give the sense of firm intellectual structure, but are full of the appeal of the brightly incidental, or the energy of undisciplined emotion. The preacher with a mind quite unprepared for the subtleties of the closer type of argument may happily give himself to some pattern of Marxian thought. Clever advertising fascinates many parsons, and it is easy to spend one's time getting publicity for a product without paying adequate attention to the nature of the product itself. The problems of organization are also fascinating, and one may become so busy administering a great church that the spirit of the living creature quite fails to master the wheels.

The bitter vicissitudes of the contemporary world, from which it is easy to say that all rational meaning has disappeared, have formed the basis for many an adventure into existential philosophy; and the preacher too may become so obsessed by the driving wedge of some immediate experience which he can thrust into the chaos with an immense sense of vital energy, that the thought of cool, clear criticism in the light of intellectual standards seems an annoying attempt on the part of the irrelevant to take the place of that which is compelling in life itself. It is significant that the decadent period in France produced the most hot and energetic of the French existentialists. If you have an immediate contact with something which seems totally vital, like Jean-Paul Sartre you can get along without God quite nicely. And this is not so far from the preacher as it may seem. There are parsons in high places full of energy and their own sort of personal and social idealism whose words curiously lack any compelling reference to the living God.

If the preacher is a reader of such writing he is likely to be impressed by certain qualities in Jean-Paul Sartre's *Existentialism and Humanism*.² The ringing emphasis on the absolute character of "free commitment" strikes him as being very important. His contention that all existentialists have in common the belief that existence comes before essence, has a pleasant sound. Is it not the business of the preacher to take people as he finds them in living experience, and to try to help them to make the most of this experience? Will not questions about essence take his mind off the main track and divert him from his true work?

When the preacher reads Gabriel Marcel's *The Philosophy of Existence*³ he finds that the growing horror of the spirit of abstraction, which this devout Catholic so earnestly expresses, deeply appeals to him. Is there

² London: Methuen & Co., 1949.

³ New York: Philosophical Library, 1949.

any way in which the preacher can more surely come upon frustration than by filling his sermons with abstract statements? And is not the cultivation of the mind inevitably an education in the use of abstractions?

And when the preacher reads Karl Jaspers' *The European Spirit*⁴ he finds sentences which deeply appeal to him. "To live as an interpreter who lovingly tends what must never be lost to the consciousness of mankind would not be to live badly." "In more than one European country today, under the name of existential philosophy, the thought is growing of a common practice of life, different in form, it is true, to the point of alienation, but perhaps arising from related impulses." The thought grows that perhaps we may best go directly to experience to teach us about itself. Perhaps we have quite overestimated the contribution which the mind makes to the understanding of life. And when Jaspers declares, "It is a simple fact that without the Bible we pass into nothing," the unintellectual preacher begins to suspect that for a long time he has been an existentialist without knowing it.

II. THE DEFENSE OF THE MIND

A little examination, however, will make it abundantly clear that the arguments are by no means all on one side. An article in *The Times Literary Supplement* (London) of Friday, May 27, 1949, asks the question which penetrates to the root of the matter: "For what other means have we of attaining truth but the intellect?" If we surrender to the attack on the mind we are left meaninglessly moving about, the victim of every passing thought or emotion with no standard by which to judge and no secure basis for anything we say. You have to use your mind in order to attack the mind! And this invalidates the whole process.

Kierkegaard turned from Hegel. But without Hegel he could never have constructed his own arguments. Sartre is at every moment using the very intellectual standards he has repudiated in order to construct a discussion which denies their validity. And the very fact that human language has its basis in an implicit rationality always makes it rather absurd to use forms of words to deny their possession of precisely that which gives them their validity. You can use the reason to correct the faults of the reason badly used, but you cannot justifiably use the reason to deny the competence of reason itself. In the same article in the *Times Supplement* from which we have already quoted ("Critique of Existentialism"), this verdict regarding the existentialists is set forth: "Reacting

⁴ London: S. C. M. Press, 1948.

against a self-contained and self-sufficient human intellectualism, they have shown a deplorable readiness to throw the human intellect over altogether."

One is not surprised that Professor L. Harold DeWolf in that very thoughtful and often searching book, *The Religious Revolt Against Reason*,⁵ concludes, "The disbelief in reason, although it has given rise to many good influences along the way, is fundamentally self-contradictory." And the reader will think very seriously when he comes upon his words, "Only faith in the truth will make possible its achievement." And Professor DeWolf really draws blood when he says, "Once the arbitrament of reason is rejected, . . . a man may be continually tempted to identify his own opinions with the thoughts of God himself and to repudiate the contrary ideas of his fellows as the wily devices of Satan."

The use of standards without any sound basis for such standards becomes almost inevitable if one surrenders to the attack on the mind. Marjorie Grene in *Dreadful Freedom: a Critique of Existentialism*⁶ shrewdly wonders "how freedom as the sole and sufficient moral standard can operate." "A man can be cowardly or dishonorable only if he already believes in the value of courage or honor." But the belief in such values is very definitely an act of the mind which has been discredited.

In truth the existentialist is all the while getting into difficulty because he simply must use the mind. So we are not surprised when Helmut Kuhn in *Encounter With Nothingness*⁷ discusses the "eclipse of existentialism in the thinking of existentialists." "It is one of the characteristics of Existentialism that its adherents are continually on the verge of apostasy." "The problem consists in knowing how to speak without contradiction of an abyss in which reason perishes and yet take reason across the abyss for purposes of dogmatic exegesis and construction. It is an attempt to justify the unjustifiable." The truth is that all the philosophical positions which use the mind to dethrone the mind come upon complete disintegration at last.

One is not surprised, then, when that distinguished scholar and thinker Jacques Maritain, in his book *Existence and the Existent*,⁸ declares:

There are two fundamentally different ways of interpreting the word existentialism. One is to affirm the primacy of existence, but as implying and preserving essences or natures and as manifesting the supreme victory of the intellect and intelligibility. This is what I consider to be authentic existentialism. The other way is to affirm the primacy of existence but as destroying or abolishing essences or natures and

⁵ Harper & Brothers, 1949.

⁶ Chicago University Press, 1948.

⁷ Hinsdale, Ill.: Henry Regnery Co., 1949.

⁸ New York: Pantheon Books, 1948.

as manifesting the supreme defeat of the intellect and of intelligibility. This is what I consider to be apocryphal existentialism, the current kind which "no longer signifies anything at all."

Just because there is no sound intellectual basis for this current existentialism, you are not surprised to find its proponents taking all sorts of positions and contradicting each other in a fashion which quite equals and perhaps surpasses their capacity to contradict themselves. As Jean Wahl in his *Short History of Existentialism*⁹ asserts in speaking of the German existentialist Heidegger, "we cannot set aside the fact that at the time of the formation and initial triumphs of Nazism, his 'resolute decision' was to follow the lead of the Nazi chiefs." So Sartre makes existentialism the vehicle of an atheistic position. And so Marcel attempts to be at once a sound Catholic and an existentialist.

The Christian preacher can scarcely be willing to submit to all the inner contradiction and outer confusion of existentialist thought. The attack on the mind falls down before the assured defense of the mind conscious of its essential qualities and of its actual powers.

III. THE PREACHER'S USE OF HIS OWN MIND

It is then necessary that the preacher shall make the work of his own mind sound and dependable. He must learn to think clearly, and he must build a house of the mind in which he can live with satisfaction and with assurance. He must think of Christianity as a corpus of thought which releases the deepest and richest emotion and which becomes a guide to action. He must make his thinking coherent, so that he will not contradict in one sermon what he has asserted in another or accomplish the extraordinary feat of filling a single sermon with brilliant contradictions. And what he believes to be true must become alive with all the richness of profound personal experience. He will not make the mistake of supposing that living experience cannot be related to coherent thought. The existentialist thinkers often throw off insights which have great value if they are submitted to the tests of sound thought, but which are only confusing if they are held in thin air quite apart from the sound processes of the mind.

When Karl Jaspers in *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*¹⁰ informs us that "Authority is not merely the obedient acceptance of the guidance of an institution and its representatives the priests, it is also the acceptance in reverence and trust of the spiritual guidance of the great past which the

⁹ Philosophical Library, 1949.

¹⁰ Philosophical Library, 1949.

last three millennia represent," he says something which is quite true, but which as an existentialist he simply has no right to say. When in the same volume he asserts, "The truth has coherence, the false is scattered," again he says something which is not only quite true but very important. But he is adroitly calling to his aid positions to which as an existentialist he has no right to appeal. The Christian preacher who is a well-trained thinker may be pardoned if he chuckles a little when existentialists suddenly say true things which have no true rootage in their way of thinking but which are a part of that classical use of the mind which they repudiate.

The Christian preacher begins with real men in a real world made and controlled by a real God. As these things are alive in his experience as well as clear in his mind, they have that quality of quickening energy which some people would assert only the existentialists possess. The Christian preacher goes on with Christ alive among men, speaking deathless words and doing a deathless deed of loving rescue. So God becomes real in human life. And so God becomes available to men. He lives in a world where past and present and future are held secure in the Divine character and the Divine purpose. Every experience of men comes warm and potent to be judged by Christian sanctions and to be accepted or rejected by that living experience which makes him aware of the will of God in Christ. All good things of every race, of every culture, and of every religion are given a place in the house of his mind. But there is a throne room in that house. And on that throne sits the God whose face he sees in the face of Jesus Christ.

He is saved from the fallacies of abstraction by his concrete experience of life and religion. And he is saved from confusing the vivid and the real by living at the place where profound experience and clear thinking meet. He perpetually renews his experience of life and religion by fellowship with God and fellowship with men. When phrases begin to become hard and conventional, he does not discard the vitality they once possessed, in dislike of the formal phrases. He goes back to the vitality, and so he resurrects the phrases. He does not in the bad sense become his own disciple, endlessly repeating sentences which were once real to him but from which the meaning has seeped away. He perpetually renews his life at the fountains of perennial vitality. And so again and again his words are as full of life as if they had come fresh from the center of his own creative energy and had never been used before.

When suffering and agony come, he takes them to the living God and finds them transfigured by the Divine presence and the Divine comfort.

He is completely saved from a psychopathic idealization of agony. And he is completely saved from the temptation to worship suffering more than he worships God. And because all of his experience is subjected to the clearest and most honest analysis, and each experience is given its place in the orderly house of his mind, he comes to have an intellectual serenity which grows into moral poise and is crowned at last by spiritual peace.

So it comes to pass that the Christian preacher who has a living experience of the things of God in Christ, and who subjects all of these things to the most searching mental tests, finds a happy combination of vitality and security. He never uses the paradox as a means of escape from intellectual responsibility. And his thinking by its clarity saves him from inner contradiction and from the confusion of living in part a hundred different lives. He has everything which the existentialist sadly seeks and for which the existentialist vainly longs. And he has what the existentialist never knows. He has the security of true intellectual peace.

IV. THE PREACHER'S APPEAL TO THE MINDS OF OTHERS

This, then, is the quality of the preacher who may attempt with any sort of hope to be the pastor of the minds of men. He believes in the minds of the men to whom he is to speak because he has found mental security for himself. And he is able to believe in the men to whose minds he is to speak because the view of man with his mind in control puts everything else in right relations. The great Old Testament word, "Come now, let us reason together," is implicit or explicit in every word the preacher utters. It is because of this that the Bishop of Southwell, F. R. Barry, in his powerful book *The Recovery of Man*,¹¹ finds it necessary to refer to that "anti-humanistic tendency which is in my judgment incompatible with the genius of Christianity" and to say "Christianity is the real humanism." With ringing words he declares: "The great task of the Church in this era is the rehabilitation of humanism." This means "a faith in reason based upon the twofold conviction that the universe in its nature is rational and that the human mind is a valid instrument." So one is saved from the "passive credulity of the empty mind." It is the preacher to whom just these insights have become real who can speak most powerfully to the minds of men.

The man in the pew is quick to detect the quality of respect for man and for his mind in the words of the preacher. The sense that the man in the pulpit has a full and satisfactory mental life is deeply reassuring to the man who sits listening to his interpretation of life in the terms of the

¹¹ Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949.

Christian religion. As he hears that the Word became flesh, he begins to understand that this means that the flesh has some genuine affinity for the Word. There is something about the flesh which makes it possible for the Word to use it as the instrument of the Divine life. There is something in man to which God can speak. The mind of man was made to think God's thoughts after him. The reason of man is the candle of the Lord. Man is made in the image of God and to that quality of life which is expressed by these words he is asked to return. Even the Prodigal in Swineland, when he repented, according to the words of Jesus "came to himself," and the self to which he came was a good self. He did not belong with the swine. He belonged in his father's house. He would leave Swineland. He would arise and go to his father. This emphasis on the dignity of man is a part of the acceptance of the high place which belongs to the human reason. Man may have used his mind amiss. But it still bears the marks of the signature of God.

The man in the pew can bear the sternest castigation for the misuse of great powers. But when the man in the pulpit attacks the mind of man as the unworthy instrument of a decadent spirit the man in the pew is quite likely, and quite rightly, to turn away in disgust. The pastor of the minds of men must believe in the minds which he is to guide. Our minds are made for God. And they are restless until they find rest in him.

The growing mind is likely to have many difficulties with life and with religion. And the preacher who guides the thoughts of his hearers must know how to deal with the problems of the confused mind, the anxious mind, the skeptical mind, and the bitter mind. Life is from the start a very complicated and commanding business. The wise preacher will be very careful to avoid the pitfall of oversimplification. He will not try to make everything simpler than anything actually is. He will have the rare gift of intellectual sympathy. He will give to the man who is in intellectual difficulty the sense that he understands him and respects him. He too has known the battle for faith in the midst of doubt. He too has felt the hard denials of this baffling world. This very quality of understanding comes like balm to the troubled mind and the tortured spirit in the thought of a living relation between God and man.

Doubt with respect to particular matters may well turn out to be justified. Skepticism with regard to certain concrete assertions may prove again and again to be soundly based. The true pastor of the mind has the greatest respect for the free mind in search for truth. Indeed, that is a part of the faith he holds in the reason itself. But there are doubts which are full

of poison. Doubt as to the good purpose which runs through all life does a deadly work in a man's mind. Doubt as to the ultimate rationality of the universe, if followed the whole length of its meaning, would take away the reason for living. And there is skepticism which is like a fatal disease. To be skeptical about the ultimate moral values, about truth and goodness and faithfulness and honesty, is to set going processes of disintegration which would bring to an end everything which gives meaning to existence. The man the house of whose mind is a complete mental and moral structure is secure from the ultimate doubts and the ultimate skepticisms. All true doubt is the by-product of a great faith. And all worthy skepticism is the critical action of an ultimate belief. So the pastor of men's minds teaches men to doubt that which ought to be doubted and to be skeptical about that which is unworthy of belief. And he does this in the name of a central and ultimate confidence which cannot be shaken.

The very shrewd practicalities which engross the attention of so many parsons have their justification so soundly based in good reason that every small action somehow finds its root in the intelligence. Action as the expression of a sound use of the reason is one thing. Action as a substitute for any effective use of the mind is quite another. You do not have to hold your ultimate corpus of thought in your mind all the while. But it must be there ready for use the moment it is needed. And preacher and people must retreat again and again into that house of the mind where the great ultimate Christian truths and convictions dwell together in happy harmony.

It is the greatest possible thing to go out into the confusions of this distraught world from a home of the mind full of intellectual peace. And not the smallest service of the true pastor of men's minds is the provision of a land of security where the Christian mind may dwell. To be sure, no man can win for another a place in that glorious land. Every man through his own disciplined thought, his own high decision, and his own turning of thoughts into deeds must secure his own place in that home of the Christian mind. But it is a happy thing to have in the pulpit a man who has thus fought his way into intellectual security. And it is a gracious thing to have the friendship of a man who is never more gladly humble than when he is claiming the right of the mind to be what God meant it to be and to do the work for which he made it. "O God, I think thy thoughts after thee" is the final word in which intelligence and worship meet before the throne about which the rainbow of hope shines forever.

Preaching the Social Implications of the Gospel

SPENCE DUNBAR

THE AGE IS PAST wherein thoughtful men can speak of the social gospel. Today they speak of the social implications of the gospel, and in that respect they are right. There is only one gospel, whether it is for man as society or for men as individuals. But now, more than ever before, there is need for a more thoughtful understanding of the method by which these implications shall be presented. Between Rauschenbusch and Oxnam there are two generations of matured thinking and measured testing. There are few men or churches that still need to hear the rallying call of Rauschenbusch to apply the message of Christ to society. Indeed, there are few secular organizations, whether they be labor unions or political parties, that have not accepted his conclusions as a basic platform for their programs. More than that, many such secular organizations have research staffs of economists, sociologists, and professional technicians that study, plan, and appraise their efforts. Their technical offering could well be the envy of all Christian churches combined. But they lack the essential without which their efforts can never bring the desired results. For, being secularists, they lack Christ.

Our own age stands in contrast to the generalizations of the first period and the secularizations of the second. It is not dealing with glowing generalizations of Christian truth. It is dealing with specific and detailed implications in specific and detailed areas of society, and is doing so from its concept of the Christian perspective. But the very fact that it is being done raises new issues for both the theologian and the preacher. Are the "specific and detailed implications" theologically sound? Is preaching the proper vehicle for their expression? Can these implications be preached by anyone?

The consideration of this is not an abstract subject having theoretical concern for the clergy alone. The layman, too, is concerned. More, he is confused and antagonized by the sociological absolutes that are all too often laid upon his conscience with greater urgency than theological dogma. He recalls that his creeds were beaten out on the anvil of history. They have

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the virtue of ecumenicity. Their interpretation has the support of council and synod. Their claims on his life can be weighed and evaluated before he gives his allegiance. To a Protestant these virtues are basically important, for he resents infallibility in any form. Most of all he resents the strident and clamorous claims of a theology that, while denying infallibility, speaks as though it were infallible. Clergy and laity alike see churches that heretofore have given thoughtful concern to the pragmatic implications of such theologically significant subjects as baptism, ministry, and sacrament, before speaking authoritatively, now take all of a man and the whole of society and allow any preacher to speak as though he were an ecumenical council himself. From the most famous metropolitan pulpits and the most obscure rural pastorates there now goes forth a cacophony of sociological implications. Their demands differ as much in degree as they vary in value.

That some of this preaching is divorced from theology is obvious to all. That some is a distortion of theology is not equally clear. The programming of good will is not the same as the preaching of the Good News. The latter involves the former but the reverse is not true. So recognizing that the pulpits of America are filled by men who have a deep concern for the implications of the gospel to which they are committed, we should consider whether these implications should be preached. To answer that question helps us to answer the others that will arise, as, e.g., how and by whom.

I

We might begin by considering just what it is that we are trying to do. Are we trying to implement Bill H. R. No. 1234 through this committee so that a new housing project will be completed for the depressed group of society, or are we trying to bring each individual into a state of willing service to his Heavenly Father, or even a combination of the two? Suppose that we could create a Utopia of prefabricated houses wherein there were tenants who showed no race discrimination and who, in addition, were pacifists who administered their community on a co-operative basis. So what? Would anyone suggest that thereby we had brought the tenants into a state of grace before God? They would be more comfortable and even more socially gracious; but would they have more piety and devotion? Does that sort of thing engender conversion to Christ? Or does it merely reduplicate itself in a desire for more, and better, prefabricated houses? The CIO has been successful in putting two cars into every garage, but has it put more sanctity into any home? Or see all the material splendor in such

parishes as many clergy find for their life's work where poverty is the exception, and multimillionaires are the rule. Has a multiplicity of things, of houses, and larger houses with larger rooms, of servants and grooms and horses and cars, made them any more gentle and loving, any more pious and devout, any more aware of social need? Have leisure and luxury, money and material things brought them any nearer to the throne of God? Who would be brash enough to say "yes"? The question answers itself.

We have one work to do for rich and poor alike. We must make men Christian so that the Inner Light will illumine the way to social progress. Reluctantly we must return to first principles. The findings of a generation of social enterprise demands it. Did Schweitzer achieve his work for Christ and the world by accumulating things or by first receiving into himself the Spirit of Christ? In fact, there isn't enough power in the Christian Social Principles to do more than build modern housing projects. It takes the Spirit of God within a man to open his mind and enkindle his heart to an understanding of the significance of wealth, whether public or private. And since he can't understand the significance of the principles without the Inner Light, modern preachers had better give him that Light—and first.

It is to forget the facts to suggest that men have called themselves Christian and have had no concern for the needs of society. William Penn, Oberlin, Woolman, Wesley, Booth, and Carver are examples to the contrary. We might as well suggest that preachers of the social gospel have called themselves Christian and have forgotten the gospel of personal salvation. The fact is that when men have really been reborn into the life which is Christ, there has been a social emphasis. And, unless one would repudiate the basic truth of the gospel, the reborn individual is the unit for social action, just as he is the unit for the reception of divine grace. Basically, the most radical and catastrophic social implication of the Good News of Christ is simply the fact that the eternal God cares for men, individual men, one at a time. After that, the social promises of a society that would feed, clothe, educate, subsidize, psychoanalyze, and regiment, fade into pale insignificance. Beside the assurance of God that "all that I have is thine," the promises of the planners of society are penurious. At the best they would create an ideologic slum inhabited by neurotics who are seeking an escape from a materialistic and humanistic dead end.

The position of the preacher who distorts theology is not so obvious as that of the one that is divorced from it. For example, how many pacifists have there been who have preached the need of enforcing a law against war, as though that were not Pharisaic legalism? How did it never occur

to them that the law itself was not pacific? Was it not a distortion of theology? Contrary to that particular distortion of theology, how many nonmilitaristic pacifists ever saw that Christianity demanded a positive affirmation of love against any kind of force? Force against wealth, force against poverty; force against race; force against divorce or even against adultery? Theological distortions are the social mirage that have enticed the wanderer away from the Fountain of Living Water. Today, the homiletical healers call men to the purging of the *id* via psychiatry, forgetting that Christ called them to the Cross, *via dolorosa*. Through his cleansing blood the selfishness of sin was to be done away. The popular devotion to psyche is a distortion of the Gospel of the Healing Cross.

The marvel of our day is that so many of the pulpits of the church are filled with men that have no theologically cogent answer to the appeals of the secular world. And where, on occasion, there is heard a strong voice, speaking with some degree of clarity about the confused issues of our times, the reaction is often unfortunate. The timing was wrong. The appeal was strident. The generalizations were too naively general. The specifications were too naively specific. So the expert specialist was amused and the uninformed layman was irritated. The net result is that the zealot for social righteousness and his confused parish enter a period of bewildered unhappiness. There is a mutual longing for "more real Christian religion and less concern for its substitutes."

It is the very essence of the gospel that the social implications be practiced in the Christian community. It is likewise the substance of common sense that the practice make both a Christian and a cogent showing. The one part calls for a good theology. The other for a good method.

Examples of advancing our line of social principles beyond our limits of theological stability and interior spiritual defense are available for illustration on every side. One need not beg for proof. Consider the official position of the churches themselves. During the last generation they forced their clergy to read their gospel from every pulpit. Episcopal pastorals decrying the blood-lust of war proclaimed that "war is murder on a colossal scale," and because "the Cross is above the Flag" good Christian men will wear the pure linen armor of faith and prayer in the world struggle for universal peace. Today those same men meeting in international councils are decrying the evils of Capital and indicating the "musts" to which Capital must submit in order to be Christian. That, in the former instance, those same authors covered their tippets with service ribbons, and in the latter instance, return to their homes to administer their work by the same capitalist

formulae, with the same capitalist endowments, causes them no second thought or even social embarrassment. Can it be, as William Law has said in his *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, that such men never really "intended" to fulfill their plans beyond the limits of "prudence and reflection"? Without suggesting that these men were wrong in either instance, we do indicate that one cannot preach the social implications until he is completely committed to them in practice.

When Thomas Loe spoke to the condition of William Penn, saying, "There is a faith which overcomes the world, and there is a faith that is overcome by the world," he was speaking as truly to the condition of the preachers today. The social implications cannot be preached by men who have no more than the intellectual discernment to recognize their worth and the skill to proclaim them.

When national political dishonesty is the social issue, the saints of God will be nonjurors; when a corrupt church is the issue, the saints of God will be nonconformists. But candles that never can be put out will never be lit by men who have not the interior power to keep burning. If capitalism and race discrimination are the tension points of contemporary social life, it ill behooves a church or its clergy to denounce it from the cushioned ease and assured security of the capitalist system, or to make a patronizing curtsy or bow to the Negro race. Men who will not "preach what they practice" because they are ashamed, or will not "practice what they preach" because they are fearful, must not toy with eternal truths. Nor dare they ask their congregations, unequipped as they are in their interior life by the indwelling presence and power of Christ, to be outriders for the King before they know how to put on the whole armor of the King. Our preaching should face the facts. Social implications are but the by-products of the personal awareness of the Presence of Christ. Compassion is not mere pity; to look with compassion on a multitude or at a social situation in such a manner that the affliction is personally shared and subjectively felt is to have "bowels of compassion." It is to be wounded by their affliction. Preaching that is less than that is sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. "There is beggary in the love that can be reckoned."

II

After the principles are once recognized, certain pragmatic difficulties fall into place. The social implications can't be preached, simply because they are unpreachable. Perhaps you are one of the old school and you feel that a certain portion of every sermon should be spent in denouncing the

demon booze, the vicious liquor industry. Perhaps you feel that most sermons should conclude with a clarion call to temperance. Or perhaps you even feel that the New Testament doctrine of temperance is not enough, that the gospel really implies prohibition. Of course, you would also feel that it implies your kind of prohibition—even the Eighteenth Amendment. It is certainly true that the great majority of preachers in another generation, who had no awareness of the modern implications, felt strongly about this particular implication. And right there lies a crucial point of the problem. Must the congregation submit to each individual minister's mania for social reform? Must temperance or pacifism or race be dunned into the minds of the congregation every Sunday? Or worse still, must the congregation listen to *all* the projects worthy of social improvement, all the social implications of the gospel? Here is a partial list of subjects, only hastily put together.

Capitalism	Communism
Socialism	Fascism
War	Atomic Bomb
Pacifism	Planned Parenthood
Juvenile Delinquency	Separation of Church and State
Week-Day Religious Education	Alcoholism
Public Health	Snake Pits
DP's	CARE
White Slavery	Slave Labor
Anti-Semitism	Prostitution
Forced Unemployment of Youth	Race
Marshall Plan	Church World Service
Slum Clearance	Community Recreation
Social Hygiene	Better Housing
Comic Books	Socialized Medicine
World Government	Mental Hygiene
The UN	The Aged
Marriage and Divorce	Civil Liberties

Which one would you suggest is unimportant? The answer probably lies somewhere near the place where the subject impinges upon your own experience. If you have spent some time in a snake pit, you would undoubtedly be an ardent preacher of the need for improvement of our psychiatric hospitals. Maybe flood control seems very remote from any religious emphasis that a minister should make. But if you had lived

through the Dakota dust storms of the early depression days, flood control would be much nearer to your heart than the needs of the unconverted in darkest China. Actually there are no unimportant implications. But even a casual observer would recognize that they cannot all be preached. There aren't enough Sundays in the year. There would not even be time to tell the Christmas story. And, of course, there would not be time to preach the gospel that would give the power to implement the implications. There would not be time to speak about the great themes of God, Man, Sin, Salvation, Immortality; themes that give meaning to the social prophet's message.

Try working up some enthusiasm for slum clearance in an urban or rural center with a people who have made no self-commitment to the Doctrine of Man. Try preaching the social implications of the gospel about race, anti-Semitism, Ku Klux pogroms to people who are not sensitive to the Doctrine of God or of Sin. It is fruitless. It does nothing more than irritate. Medical colleges teach surgery; but only to students who are committed to the accepted principles of anatomy. We do not preach engineering or mathematics or music. We teach them. We study, discuss, and consider them. We learn the axioms, the basic principles, the relevant techniques. We practice and experiment with them. But we don't preach them.

The social implications of the gospel are unpreachable because they open up fields that require specialized knowledge, study, discussion, and experiment before they can be properly understood and adequately implemented. To be specific, think of socialized medicine. Quite definitely every practicing Christian should have such an illumined attitude toward the physical needs of his fellow men that he would want more and better medical facilities available to solve the national problem of social health. But try to preach that without being either naively vague or stupidly specific. The sweetness-and-light social gospeler exhorts his people to recognize a bad situation and create a good one. The self-assured specialist involves himself in something quite out of his depth. Does he mean socialized medicine as practiced in England? Does he mean the Wagner-Murray-Dingle Fair Deal Dole? Does he mean the medically sponsored Michigan Plan? Or does he mean something clear only to himself? Is he enough of a sociologist to bring order out of a chaos that disturbs the economist, the politician, the medical profession, the government agencies, and great universities? From whence came this alchemy that gives him solutions in the very places where all the other struggling professions find only problems? Perhaps his self-assurance is born of a lack of knowledge.

One of the fastest growing Protestant churches in America today spends part of its sermon time every Sunday, and most of its printed teaching every week in each of its publications, plugging for just a few social implications of the gospel. I don't suggest that what they teach is either true or false. I merely suggest that certain social implications are important to them and that they teach no others. And what do they teach? It is very simple and they quote the Scripture to prove it—making converts by the dozen every day. Smoking is on a level with alcoholism; alcoholism is as vile as adultery; the eating of meat is sensual; mustard, pepper, and all condiments excite the lusts of the flesh; to eat mustard is to make one think adulterously, and didn't Jesus himself teach that to think an evil thought is the same as committing it? Conclusion: to eat mustard is to be an adulterer. Strange theology? Laymen often feel that clergy are about as accurate as that!

One had better know what he is talking about before he sets himself up as an authority in a dozen subjects, each of which would consume a lifetime of study to understand, and a lifetime of effort to make effective.

What, then, will the preacher do with the social implications of the Gospel? He will do two things!

First of all he will concern himself with the development of Christian attitudes toward a certain situation. His own attitude will not show devotion to the Demon Absolute, dramatically dogmatizing about things with which the gospel speaks with Christlike humility and simplicity. He will speak with a "concern" about a specific social problem. He will, if he is speaking, e.g., about "race," admit with the sociological experts that he does not have detailed conclusions about specific reactions to specific tensions. He will dramatize the opportunity that faces a Christian who has committed himself to the Christian life. But he will, likewise, be gracious to those who are in complete disagreement with him, perhaps, to the southerners who inherited a condition without adequate preparation, who have faced the white economic problems with as little economic solution as they have had to face the Negro one. He will point out that the problems involved in the "race" question are similar to, and sometimes altogether like, the same problems that "white churchmen" have to face with "white churchmen." They are the problems of disparity between the folk ways of rich and poor, of educated and uneducated, of the Social Registerite and the great majority. He will admit to a failure where he, himself, is responsible—even in his own parish. He will admit that he is only a specialist in Christian attitudes, and recognizing his inadequacy to bring sociologic

and economic solutions to the problem he will preach with Paul, "Behold, I show you a better way."

Then, he will do the second thing. He will invite those who share his "concern" to an activist group meeting, where competent authorities in the sociologic, economic, and educational fields will discuss the matter against a background of research and experimental authority. What matter if only a few attend? Jesus began with only a handful; then they went out to do things: to preach, teach, heal, and most of all to love and help.

At a time when the National Boards of Christian Social Relations were flooding the country with pamphlets about the way to solve the problems of the returning veterans, the minister of a church in a great metropolitan area approached the subject in such a manner as we suggest. Then he held meetings every night for a week, considering the legal, economic, psychiatric, social, and religious aspects. To each meeting two nationally famous experts in the particular subject were invited. For the G.I. Bill of rights, the head of the VA and the head of his legal department; for the psychiatric phase, the director of the state mental hospital and a world-famous brain surgeon; and so on. To start the meeting, motion pictures of each phase of the work were shown. The place was crowded with top-flight leaders of government, social, and educational agencies, and the poorer, horny-handed fathers and mothers of boys who were about to return home: boys whom the baptism of fire and the tensions of distraught society had made into men without the benefit of ever having been young men.

The dogmatic statements that had been so facilely made by the department pamphlets were not so simple to the experts. Where the pamphlets had conclusions, the experts were not so sure. They still had questions. But out of it came a new Christian attitude, and an activist group that would seek solutions.

Perhaps you will suggest that every church cannot get such a list of leaders together, and we admit it. But that only intensifies the problem of the preacher of social implications. It demonstrates more adequately that the implications cannot be preached, and simply because they are unpreachable. But against a background of mature Christian attitudes, and a dependence upon the Holy Spirit of God, the preacher can encourage the consideration, the study of a subject, and enlist an intelligent activist concern. Let the preacher of the Gospel make the Gospel live, and a congregation with a deep "concern" will make the social implications a matter for study and experience.

Prospects for a Christian Philosophy

DAVID E. ROBERTS

WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS for a Christian philosophy in our age?

Throughout most of its history, Western thought rested upon a few basic principles. These were never threatened by the great debate between Platonism and Aristotelianism. On the contrary, the debate took them for granted; for it is impossible to have a philosophical argument unless the meaning of common terms has been fixed. So for centuries hardly anyone doubted that human reason could find a suitable place within the framework of a world that was intelligible, not only in the sense of being orderly, but in the sense of being meaningful. During this period, of course, Christianity had a very close relationship to philosophy; indeed, it is often impossible to tell whether faith succeeded in assimilating reason, or reason succeeded in assimilating faith.

But by the time we reach the sixteenth century it is obvious that a radical break has occurred; and thereafter even those philosophies which try to continue the inherited tradition manifest characteristics that we call "modern." They attempt to *reconstruct* a meaningful universe; and when the task has become one of reconstruction instead of discovery, human thought has entered into that sense of estrangement, that anxiety, that threat of utter meaninglessness which have acquired a special quality in modern man. I am not suggesting that these consequences became evident immediately; Pascal stands almost alone in the seventeenth century in giving them full expression. Nor am I suggesting that philosophers themselves were willing to accept the situation; Hegel's system was an attempt to overcome, by means of thinking, a sense of estrangement which lay much deeper than thinking.

What happened at the dawn of the modern period? No one can quite explain it, although anyone can describe it. Men began to realize that traditional philosophy could not accommodate certain overtones of creativeness, destructiveness, and solitude that they found within themselves. In

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different ways the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the rise of natural science all raised the question whether man might be a stranger in the world, and the world might be alien to him. Nineteenth-century idealism was the supreme attempt to overcome alienation by means of thought, and it failed. Its concept of Universal Mind was an attempt to restore that stability which philosophy had furnished previously through objective principles. But although this idealism aimed at a rational correlation between mankind and the system of nature, it ended by losing the living, feeling, struggling person in a scheme of logical abstractions.

I

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, a genuine synthesis between Christianity and philosophy has become increasingly difficult. It is quite right to say that conflict between religion and science is unnecessary; but that does not suffice to bring about a reconciliation between naturalism and Christianity. On the other hand, to slant idealism toward personalism does not automatically produce an ally of the gospel; for, unfortunately, personalism in Britain and America has thus far failed to discern that despair, anxiety, and guilt cannot be overcome by constructing a finite God and an optimistic interpretation of history.

Of course, Roman Catholicism has continued to defend its synthesis between Christianity and philosophy. It has tried to adjust Thomism to modern science and Kantian criticism without destroying it. But whereas Aquinas in the thirteenth century could be perfectly sincere in his remarks about the freedom of philosophy, we should note that developments since the Council of Trent have made it impossible for a contemporary Catholic thinker to duplicate his attitude. The Roman Church really burned its bridges with the dogma of Papal Infallibility and the condemnation of modernism, so that at present its claim to be a guardian of intellectual freedom is little better than a fraud. Furthermore, it is impossible to leap over the last four centuries of philosophy as though they were merely an unfortunate accident. Despite the valiant efforts of Gilson and Maritain, the problems of the twentieth century cannot be solved by refurbishing answers that broke down in the fifteenth century.

To be sure, Protestants have no right to throw stones; for our efforts have also failed to prevent philosophy from following an increasingly godless path. But this does not mean that reason has succeeded in divorcing itself from faith entirely. On the contrary, it has sought alliances with substitutes for Christian faith. This is obvious in the case of Marxism.

However, I do want to say a word in this connection about naturalism. For an objective interpretation of science, every well-informed person today is dependent upon naturalism, whether he admits it or not; and the application of empirical methods to the study of morality, art, and religion has also been extremely fruitful in some respects. But naturalism goes further and sets itself up as a substitute for Christianity. The title of John Dewey's book, *A Common Faith*, well illustrates this fact. And it is as a faith that naturalism falls into serious ambiguity. On the one hand, it produces a religious titanism in which man is regarded as the self-sufficient source of meaning and value. But on the other hand, through a dogmatic and indiscriminate commitment to the empirical method, it treats the self as though it were a thing. Acknowledging the importance of religious values, naturalism seeks to offer a way of salvation that will be free from illusions; but this way of salvation falls into its own kind of illusion by trying to absorb man wholly into a scheme of finite objects and temporality. Placing passionate trust in knowledge as an instrument of control, naturalism must stake its hopes upon the sort of civilization which can be produced by technology; and it is therefore notably feeble in attaining a critical perspective upon the cultural and spiritual perils which result from technology.

There is another important movement that I want to mention. Under the name of "Existentialism," it protests against the whole history of philosophy by insisting that the personal commitments of a thinker must be incorporated into his definition of truth instead of excluded from it. It accuses all objective philosophies of sundering reason from life by trying to evade such human polarities as freedom-and-destiny, anxiety-and-courage, isolation-and-community, guilt-and-forgiveness, instead of recognizing that these polarities must remain perpetually at the center of vital thinking. Thus existentialism is a white-hot search for new answers, but at present the movement is split right down the middle. One group is trying to make an atheistic acceptance of freedom and despair serve as the only possible answer. The other group is finding that the implications of human responsibility lead inescapably to a revival of religious faith—Jewish, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, or Protestant.

I know that many contemporary theologians and philosophers detest the whole phenomenon of existentialism; and only a very small group of Protestant writers have shown a discernment, in dealing with this type of thinking, comparable to that of certain French Catholic thinkers. Some of the latter are highly critical of Thomism; and if a Roman Catholic can be

free enough to criticize Thomism, surely a Protestant ought to be free enough to criticize his own previous assumptions.

Thus far I have been talking about philosophies which are either openly or covertly allied with faith of some kind. It is highly significant that where such an alliance does not exist at all, thought has degenerated into playing a game with semantics. Insofar as logical positivism is a demand for rigor and clarity in the employment of intellectual tools, we have a great deal to learn from it. But when it insists that we should use the tools for trivial instead of momentous purposes, then it must be combated like the plague. As a boy I had a friend who was an excellent mechanic, and he spent most of his time taking an old Ford apart and putting it together again; but he was always in the garage, never out on the open highway. One day when I asked him why he was continually repairing his car but seldom drove it, he replied: "Oh, I don't want to go anywhere; I just like to hear the motor run smoothly." As I look back on it, that friend of mine might well serve as a symbol for logical positivism.

But if we grant that philosophy must be allied to faith of some sort, we should also acknowledge that Protestantism has not always grasped the significance of this fact. The Reformers rightly discerned some of the dangers of the medieval system. For example, their rediscovery of the Bible made them realize that Scholasticism had often distorted revelation in the process of trying to synthesize it with philosophy. But the Reformation failed to provide adequately for a *positive* relationship between reason and theology; and as a consequence philosophy ever since has been trying to supply theological answers from its own resources.

This has placed the Protestant church on the defensive. It has tried to protect itself by backing those thinkers who seemed congenial against those who seemed antagonistic; but as secular philosophy has become increasingly anti-Christian, the church has tended to lose touch with whole areas of it. Once when Mr. Hoover complained to Calvin Coolidge about an especially severe attack in the newspapers, the latter replied: "I never read the fellows who are against me." We pastors and professors have sometimes been a bit like Mr. Coolidge.

Quite specifically, "the philosophy of religion" now finds itself in a rather precarious position. Secular thinkers look upon this discipline as muddleheaded and dishonest because it purports to be engaging in philosophical criticism, while insisting on arriving at theistic conclusions. On the other hand, theologians likewise regard it as muddleheaded and dishonest

because it tries by rational argument to establish an outlook which can only be reached through faith.

II

I still believe that the best prospects for a Christian philosophy are to be found within the Protestant tradition; but their fulfillment will make exacting demands upon us. For one thing, we shall have to recognize that philosophy exists in order to get rid of nonsense; therefore it is always disturbing to a great many people, including some of our fellow Christians, and including, perhaps, ourselves. Yet we cannot set arbitrary limits to what the natural sciences or historical criticism or logical analysis may disclose. And where the results are well established, it is the Christian believer who is at fault if he insists that he is going to use his *faith* to settle questions of biology, historical research, or rational consistency. Furthermore, we must recognize that, whether it operates inside or outside the church, philosophy cannot be expected to supply answers to the paramount questions of forgiveness and salvation. It examines all the great questions and their implications; but it cannot furnish the Christian answer because that answer consists in personal response to God within a fellowship which he initiates. Nevertheless, despite these somewhat austere characteristics of philosophy, theologians make a mistake whenever they rejoice at, or connive at, its breakdown. For the same factors which prevent men from reaching a constructive philosophy also prevent them from reaching an intellectually fearless form of Christian faith.

Though it may sound grandiose to suggest that Protestantism can contribute to the revival and emancipation of philosophy, the grandiosity disappears as soon as we look at our actual accomplishments. And remember that we must now move ahead in an age which prevailingly regards metaphysical and religious beliefs as merely the imaginative projection of psychological needs and social conditioning. We must press forward in an age of relativism, and let us not underestimate what this means. In many of our colleges today, professors and students alike are indescribably cut off from the reflections which in the past have kept men human. They can still study the history of these reflections with some erudition; but the great problems of human existence, the great questions about the ground of meaning and value, have gone dead.

Some of us have tried to point out that relativism is self-defeating; in the process of undermining all other claims to truth, it undermines its own. But in reply we are told that an enlightened man does not need absolute criteria of truth and value; he can get along quite well by means of scientific

verification and pragmatic tests. Now I have nothing whatever against scientific information and pragmatic tests; but I have yet to encounter a momentous human issue which could be dealt with *solely* by these means. The missing factor here is personal decision. It is not supplied by gathering scientific information. And it is not supplied by looking at results,—for decisions precede results, and if a man's decisions are defective then his evaluation of the results is likely to be defective also. Therefore I am compelled to conclude that the relativist is trying to throw dust in our eyes. He wants to confine attention to those problems which really *can* be solved by objective means, because he is baffled about how to deal with those personal commitments wherein alone we may become aware of an absolute claim upon us. Having despaired of finding any inward, vital answers to the great questions: "What should I believe? What ought I to do? What may I hope?" he is reduced to studying empirically what men happen to believe, do, and hope.

Our generation is crying out for something better than this; and in trying to offer something better, Protestantism must choose between three alternatives.

The first alternative is an optimistic approach. It assumes that the current disintegration of philosophy represents only a passing phase. It assumes that the human spirit must surely rise again to produce comprehensive systems of cosmology, ethics, and ontology. Accordingly, the church should keep in touch with those philosophical forces which have not yet broken down. Protestants, in some respects like Catholics, should look forward confidently to that day when philosophy will once again enter naturally into a synthesis with Christian faith, so that both together can furnish the basis for an integral culture. Then the church will be the center of a world-wide Christian society; and the destructive conflict between the sacred and the secular will be at an end.

By temperament and inclination, I favor this answer; but if you ask what I think is actually going to happen, I am compelled to reject it. To entertain such hopes will foredoom us to disappointment; it will saddle us with a scheme of interpretation into which ongoing events simply do not fit; and when the whole venture comes tumbling about our heads, we shall be left spiritually naked amid the ruins.

The second alternative calls for an outright declaration of war against the modern world. Leaving the twentieth century to stew in its own juice, it invokes forces which are quite outside and above secular history. This second alternative has taken its name from Karl Barth, but it extends far

beyond his immediate influence, and it will continue to win ground in the next decades. Setting the church against the world in a fashion more uncompromising than Catholicism, it declares that the political, scientific, and philosophical developments of our age have nothing to do with the gospel. If we want to find guidance for our lives we must go beyond the bankrupt assumptions of modern civilization and listen to the Bible in a fresh and living way. This does not mean that we must return to the world view of the first century. These theologians accept the findings of natural science, of higher criticism, and of comparative religion. But they insist that revelation lies quite beyond such studies. From within the standpoint of faith it is possible to deal with the fact that the Bible is a human document, and that the Jewish-Christian tradition has always been interrelated with other religious and social forces. But they assert that it is impossible to reverse the process. It is impossible to move *from* viewing the Bible simply as a human document *to* faith in God as speaking and acting through the events it records.

The pattern I have just described occurs repeatedly in Continental theology. It is possible from within faith in the Deity of Christ to deal with the human career of Jesus—the temptations, the limitations in his knowledge, his role as a prophet, teacher, and martyr. But it is impossible, simply by a study of the historical facts about his life, to reach faith in his Deity.

Again, it is possible from within faith to discover how God's saving work operates throughout history as a whole—from the first religious longings of primitive man, through the ethical monotheism and Messianic expectations of the Jewish people, to the central event of the Incarnation, and forward through the Christian centuries toward that culmination in the Kingdom of God which the existence of the church foreshadows. But it is impossible, beginning with a general survey of history, to arrive by induction at an interpretation which judges all time in the light of one central segment of time, namely, the saving work of Jesus Christ.

Now what are we to say of this second alternative? We should not be surprised that it is attractive to many Protestants. It promises release from relativism, skepticism, and despair. It also safeguards against the danger of putting our primary trust in some sort of human improvement in history. It tells us that the deviltries and tragedies of our age cannot destroy God and his redemptive purpose for the race. It puts our lives in a setting where we can work courageously with others—in the face of persecution and death, if need be—for a destiny which does not stand or fall with our earthly success or failure.

And yet I cannot completely accept this second alternative. For in some respects it intensifies the ills it seeks to cure—such ills as philosophical skepticism, unresolved despair, separation of the church from the world, and retreat into bad authoritarianism. In short, I cannot believe that Protestantism's finest and final message is to be found in a *Dogmatics* which devotes several thousand pages of outstanding theological competence to the thesis that man is theologically incompetent. If we are to deal honestly with continuities as well as discontinuities, we cannot simply set revelation over against human reason and let it go at that. If we are to take belief in the Incarnation seriously, we must also take seriously the fact that it fulfills universal rational structures and universal human needs. If we are to believe that God can redeem history through Jesus Christ, we must also believe that his creative relationship with history has never been sundered.

I can understand why men are prompted to build protective walls around theology amidst the horrors of the twentieth century; but I cannot believe that Christian faith is genuinely fortified by building such walls.

III

What, then, is the *third alternative*? It would be easy at this point to give wings to fancy, envisaging perfect Christian philosophers who could weld biblical revelation and secular thought together into a serene, coherent unity. But it is better to come down to earth by asking what you and I can hope to do.

Although we can learn much from the positions I have just outlined, our job will not be one of finding a safe middle road between them. The first alternative continually underestimates the seriousness of the conflict between God and the world; and the second alternative continually forgets that Christianity must be expressed through every aspect of human life and secular history. If we are to go beyond these mistakes, we must know the *world* from the inside as well as the Faith from the inside. Only so can we hope to break down the barriers by which men shut themselves off from the healing power of the gospel. And what impresses me about this third approach is not so much its inclusiveness as its agony. It is not safe, serene, and synthetic at all. We must take our stand in the midst of modern life, without capitulating to it, and yet without shouting epithets from behind the walls of a pre-established fortress.

In such a situation the Christian philosopher is always in danger of being torn apart. On the one hand, he lays himself open to the full impact

of the most threatening questions; for he knows that if a Christian today is to be free from evasions and special pleading, he must understand the *spirit* of a Marx, a Nietzsche, a Bertrand Russell, a Sartre, or a John Dewey, whether he reads their books or not. On the other hand, he lays himself open to the full impact of the gospel; for he knows that if a philosopher is to be cleansed of intellectual pride, he must ask forgiveness from a God who is no respecter of I.Q.'s. The rigor of his thinking threatens the stability of his faith; and the sincerity of his faith struggles with the sophistication of his thinking. Nevertheless many of us, in various ways, find that something like this is not only our predicament but our vocation. For as Christians, it is our task to discern how the revelation of God in Jesus Christ meets man's *intellectual* needs along with others needs. And as thinkers, it is our task to relate theology to questions which men ask, and always will ask, in worldly language.

Now is this a hopelessly ambiguous position? Must the "philosophy of religion" always try to serve two masters? The Incarnation itself teaches us to say "No." This can be a single task, a mediatorial task, where for the sake of the world we give ourselves to the gospel, and for the sake of the gospel we give ourselves to the world.

You may retort that no one is good enough to indulge in this imitation of Christ, and I agree with you entirely. But if the ministry had to wait for people good enough, it would soon cease to exist, and the same thing is true of the philosophy of religion. Nevertheless, for some of us there is a special reason for holding back. We may have had a terrific struggle to avoid winding up simply as secular men ourselves. Consequently we may be loath to reawaken acquaintance with patterns of thought which have led us to blank walls, to cynicism, and to disgust with the visible church. If we have found some answers to these threats, we may not want to revive the threats—and we may not want to tamper with the answers.

But in the end we must take the risk. We must be willing to come out of our academic and ecclesiastical shells. In a recent discussion I heard several theologians say that they regarded all this European talk about despair as morbid because they had never experienced it themselves, and their students never mentioned it to them. My reactions to that discussion put me in peril of violating the injunction: "Judge not, that ye be not judged." But honestly, how can even a safe and tidy academic career anesthetize us professors so completely? And if our students never talk to us about despair, may that not merely indicate that we are too pedantic and remote for them to reach us? At any rate, I am convinced that we must

take off our Saul's armor of classroom systems, pious sanctions, and pre-fabricated answers if we expect the modern world to come halfway when we go forth to meet it.

Actually our task is infinitely harder than David's, for we must *minister* to this huge Philistine instead of throwing stones at him. Maybe it seems impossible. And yet if the job were done well enough, who can say how much it might contribute to an intellectual and religious recovery in our own day? By and large secular philosophy is so uninspiring that many thoughtful people are yearning for something better; and they might be reached if Christianity were presented to them in a manner which meets the test of their honest questioning instead of seeming to demand a renunciation of intellectual integrity. But Protestantism cannot meet this test by remaining exclusively preoccupied with theological controversy within the church. Nor can it meet it by arranging a chronology, saying, first let us consolidate dogmatics within the Ecumenical Movement, and then let us work out the apologetic implications of this unified message. There isn't time. But quite apart from that, as the World Council itself wisely recognizes, the church can reach greater clarity concerning what the gospel message *is* only by continual interaction with the thought of our contemporary world.

What I have been trying to say has been so well expressed by Professor H. A. Hodges, that I conclude with his words:

To let down our barriers, to enter into the heart of the modern intellectual situation, to undergo . . . something of what the Christless world perpetually endures, and in the midst of the storm to invoke him who commands the wind and the waves, on behalf of those who do not know his name—this is not easy, but it is the only way of redemption. It is the way of the Cross, and . . . there is an intellectual as well as a . . . spiritual Cross to be borne; but we cannot begin to bear it unless we have that in us which casts out fear.¹

¹ Camfield, F. W., ed., *Reformation Old and New*. Lutterworth Press, 1947, p. 194.

What Do We Congregationalists Do Now?

ELMER S. FREEMAN

WHAT DO WE CONGREGATIONALISTS do now, since "The Merger" is stalled in the courts? Briefly and succinctly, if we are wise, we get on with the main business of this or any other Christian church; the business of changing human lives and witnessing for the Kingdom of God in the communities where our churches stand. I do not mean that we forget the proposed union with the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Even if from our side we desired to do so, the understanding and generous forbearance the Evangelical and Reformed Church has shown toward us in our difficulties would forbid any premature defeatism on our part. If this particular union was originally a good idea, as I believe, it ought not to be abandoned at this point, though its form may have to be substantially modified. Of course, the higher courts may sustain the court of first jurisdiction in its finding that as we are presently constituted we cannot merge with any noncongregationally organized group on denominational levels. If so, we can cross that bridge when we come to it. But we have no moral right as a denomination to remain in a state of suspended animation pending a definite legal finding. There is urgent work to do for Christ and the Kingdom.

Therefore at this "half past 1900," at this point of critical tension between two world religions striving for mastery, we may well pause to review strategy, whether of a local church, a denomination, or any other institutional unit. But before we can decide upon a strategy we first need to review our aims. Any social organization exists at least in part in terms of purpose. Many continue to exist on momentum long after the purpose for which they were founded has been fulfilled or no longer needs to be fulfilled. If we are convinced that the Christian faith in general, and the Congregational interpretation thereof in particular, have still a valid reason for existence, then we had better take time to restudy and if necessary re-

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define our present and imminent aims. Once this has been done, the process of devising strategy to meet these aims is greatly simplified.

I

Certainly one of the primary aims to which we should address ourselves presently is that as a church we need to become theologically articulate on the part of our leaders, and theologically literate on the part of the rank and file of our people. There is a good deal of evidence to the effect that both as leaders and followers we have been for some time in a state of theological malnutrition.

Our General Council a few years ago created what was known as a Theological Commission. Some of our very best minds were made members of this Commission, and after a period of study, an excellent report was made. So far as my observation has extended, this report burst upon the consciousness of the denomination with all the resonance of a rose petal being dropped into the Grand Canyon (to use a phrase of Don Marquis'). Now we have some first-rank theological writing coming from Nels Ferré, Walter Marshall Horton, Daniel Day Williams, Paul Minear, Roger Hazelton and others. These men are attacking valiantly the problem of finding our place between "continentalism" in theology and the liberalism traditionally characteristic of our churches. We need to consider and lay before the people evidence to help them decide which side they shall take in the "religious revolt against reason." One does not need to suggest the writing of a Congregational creed. The Kansas City Statement of Faith, so called, does very well when there is added to it the still untrammelled freedom of the local church to adopt and adapt.

Within this framework two or three things appear clearly to be needed. In the first place, we may legitimately ask our theologians to lay before us a Christology which the unreconstructed liberal can accept, yet which is at the same time congruous with Scripture and with the tested and valid elements of tradition. I personally have found great satisfaction in Baillie's book, *God Was in Christ*, though I imagine some would find it too heavily weighted on the conservative side. Perhaps, however, we need some of that to set over against the quasi-Unitarianism of which we are, as a denomination, all too justly suspected.

Time was, and not so long ago, when what used to be called a "high" Christology was considered unacceptable, if indeed any solid Christology at all was not deemed superfluous,—excess baggage which impeded the progress of the social gospel and the imminent advent of the Kingdom of

God. I have the impression that we are emerging from that period, that the question "What think ye of Christ?" is being asked with increasing urgency, that a more substantial doctrine of the person and work of Christ is being demanded and must be supplied. Threatened by the upper and nether millstones of Roman Catholicism and Fundamentalism,—the one inordinately supernaturalistic, the other proceeding from an irrational and mechanical biblicism—it is incumbent upon free Protestantism creatively to weigh and evaluate the primitive *kerygma* with contemporary thought and from them, together with all other relevant factors, draw up and present a Christology which shall be both intellectually credible and spiritually dynamic.

Distinguished support is lent to this contention in an article in the Summer 1950 issue of RELIGION IN LIFE by Dr. John Frederick Olson. He sees an adequate Christology as "the central affirmation of the Christian faith and a precise indication of the creative heart of our living religion." Farther on in the same article he writes about the "wraithlike silence of the Christian pulpit in the area of Christology . . . the absence of a positive witness from the pulpit." To continue the quotation: "The greatest danger to the Christian faith today and every day is a too meager Christology. . . . A Christology can be adequate without finality, but it must be . . . of such a sort that faith in him (Christ) becomes vital and the fruits of it abundant." Dr. Olson is here addressing not only Congregationalists and not only "liberals." But perhaps in view of our recent if not traditional emphasis upon the "social gospel" at the expense of theological formulations in this and other phases, we "liberal" Congregationalists need particularly to take his counsel very much to heart.

To set alongside a satisfactory Christology, we need also a re-examination of the question "what man can make of man." The place of man in the cosmos never needed definition more than in these days. Part and parcel of such a restudy of man's place in the universe would surely be an attempt to adjust our minds to the immutable balances between sin and grace, as well as between "God's grace and man's hope," to borrow Dr. Williams' book title. One is by no means sure that we are adequately teaching our people to realize that they are not living in a charming world of sweetness and light, but in a world where stark tragedy exists and possible total destruction impends.

Yet another phase of our theological reorientation can most helpfully be an attempt at resolution of some of the most acute of our contemporary tensions. There is, for example, the tension between freedom and tyranny.

Although we greatly oversimplify the issue by describing the Russians as wholly tyrannical and ourselves as completely devoted to freedom, it is still true, I think, that the two sides are fairly well represented by these two great powers. Freedom is clearly in retreat before the forces of tyranny, which are almost everywhere on the initiative. It is in retreat not only in the lands before which what we call the "iron curtain" has fallen. It is in retreat here, among us. One evidence is the increasing number of military minds in places where real statesmen should be, and in the uncritical acceptance of practically any measure these military minds propose. Loyalty tests in which government workers are denied their most elementary rights under Anglo-Saxon law constitute yet another denial of freedom. Rumors are disquietingly recurrent of what amounts to present and impending censorship of press and radio. While we complain of a tyranny of the left abroad, we stand in grave danger from a tyranny of the right here. We shall probably not lose our freedom by anything like a *coup d'état*, but face the peril of seeing it nibbled away, bit by bit, by subtle and insidious forces of potential tyranny.

A second contemporary tension is that which could be described as the tension between escape and reality. There is a line in Adcock's poem, "The Divine Tragedy": "Reality would add to our unrest." Indeed it would! So we do our best to escape reality and go to the movies, living for a few hours in a land of shadow characters, moving about in fantastic surroundings like nothing in heaven or on earth. As I travel about the country, one of the most depressing things I see is the deadly uniformity and the awful mediocrity of our cinema, our radio, our television, and much of our literature. There are, to be sure, some bright spots in every one of these fields, some gallant attempts to make these media of communication socially useful and genuinely recreative, but they are much too few and far between.

A third area of tension in which our theologians need to help us is that between disillusionment and hope, or if you wish it put in more religious terms, between skepticism and faith. Whichever way it is expressed, it means this difference in outlook upon life: the disillusioned and skeptical regard man's ultimate fate as at best uncertain, and at worst catastrophic; the hopeful and faithful (in its true sense, meaning persons "full of faith") regard man's fate as at worst still hopeful, and at best completely happy and satisfying. If the skeptical can point to the disappearance of what one writer calls "the bland humanistic optimism," described by Dr. Trueblood as "blasphemous," the faithful have some facts on their side. There are clear and plain stirrings of conscience, resolution, and courage among men.

There is growing awareness that our redemption will arise, humanly speaking, out of the realization that man cannot redeem himself, but in the last analysis must reach out and lay hold of some power beyond himself.

From the perils of materialism, whether expressed in Communism or in contemporary, near-at-hand secularism, and of spiritual illiteracy, no theological revival will by itself suffice to save us. But if the basic problem actually is theological, as General MacArthur said, we shall not be restored to wholeness of life in society by any lesser power than that generated by a theology as dynamic in spiritual power as the founder of our faith himself.

II

A second major aim is by all means an attempt to determine the actual and potential relationship of Congregationalism to the growing ecumenical movement. This is the point at which our plight is of most concern, probably, to our brethren of other Protestant churches. The ecumenical church is described as one which would be "too catholic to be merely Roman, too orthodox to be merely Greek, and too independent to be merely Protestant." We had better take steps to decide whether our Congregationalism is so imbedded in the past that we cannot grow out of it, or whether we have the right to change our secondary, if not our basic, characteristics (if we desire) in such ways as to permit our full participation in the ecumenical movement.

It is a pity that we have allowed ourselves to be maneuvered into the position of allowing the secular authorities to define for us our essential nature. It is particularly tragic that this is happening in and to a denomination which has long been in the forefront of co-operative, ecumenical endeavors. For decades, Congregationalist leaders have been among the earliest sponsors and strongest supporters of all such movements—for comity, for co-operation, for understanding. This is still, I am certain, the desire of our national leaders. Even the members of the group opposing the proposed merger with the Evangelical and Reformed Church profess approval of continued co-operative efforts on our part, on other bases than organic union. There is little or no religiously isolationist sentiment among Congregationalists, which makes all the more regrettable the very formidable road block now thrown across one of the main avenues leading toward closer union.

It is hard to escape the conclusion that somewhere along the line there has been among us a degeneration of democracy into practical anarchy. To be sure, room must be left for the exercise of fundamental convictions, but

even as the pacifist, who for reason of conscience stands out against the decision of the social majority, so the religious individualist in other connections who in like obedience to conscience stands against a majority decision, must somewhere either yield to that decision, or face virtual isolation.

It seems now to have come to the point where the particular merger under consideration is of secondary importance. The real question now appears to be what kind of a church a congregationally organized church is. Is Congregationalism, indeed, a church at all, organizationally considered, or is it a congeries of separate and separated units, each a law unto and sufficient unto itself? We boast much of the word "fellowship" as descriptive of our churches, but does not fellowship empty itself of almost all real meaning if it becomes so loose and tenuous as to involve no sacrifice at all of sovereignty and independence? The American republic would never have been constituted had it not been for the willingness of each state to surrender some measure of its sovereignty to the larger union. What we must really decide is whether we wish to move with or against an age in which, as Dr. Trueblood says, "the characteristic religious developments are centripetal rather than centrifugal." Here we must hold strategy in abeyance until, by the slow operation of due process of law, there can be determined the area and framework within which we are at liberty to take part in the ecumenical movement.

It was heartening to learn that the June 1950 meeting in Cleveland of the General Council of the Congregational-Christian Churches took the step of authorizing the immediate appointment of a Commission on Church Polity, the purpose of which is precisely that just suggested—to examine from all the various points existing among us (promerger, antimerger, and all the intermediate views) two things. One is to arrive at some sort of conclusion as to what sort of a church we are—if we are a church at all. The other is to decide what part we can take, in view of that conclusion, in the ecumenical movement.

Surely in the final analysis, the Congregational Churches must be accorded the right to determine their own essential nature, rather than having it defined for us by secular authority. There is a sense, of course, in which we must not consider ourselves above the law; an individual or an institution living in a society may not consider itself lawless, or beyond the rules that society makes for its members. In matters of money, property, endowments, and the like, we desire to be law-abiding citizens, churches, denominations. On the other hand, to paraphrase the Oxford pronouncement, the Church is the Church—not primarily a corporation or

a business organization. Ultimately we are obligated not to the law but to the gospel. We need not claim that the Congregational order is necessarily of divine origin, and we are not defiant of the law, but we need desperately, in view of the present parlous legal straits of the Congregational-Christian denomination, to find a *modus vivendi* by which we can carry out our religious mission within the law of the land and at the same time in obedience to the imperatives of the time for life and work in the ecumenical family of free Protestant churches.

It is at this point especially that a strategy for Congregationalism, considered as one denomination, impinges upon the concern of all congregationally-ordered churches,—Baptists, Disciples, and others. The Disciples particularly are committed to the ecumenical movement; as is well known, this strong denomination has from its beginnings stood for unity among Christian people. There is a firm determination to be co-operative among large sections of the Baptist churches. Now the court apparently says that congregationalists (in the broader sense of that word) are forbidden to join with any church of dissimilar organization except by a strictly unanimous consent which would include every last and least local church in the denomination. If this decision is upheld by the higher courts, it would appear to substitute the principle of unanimity for that of representative democracy, under which we have believed ourselves to be working. And we have seen lately, in the Security Council of the United Nations, the paralyzing effects of the principle of unanimity.

Since what the courts interpret the law to mean for one congregationally-ordered denomination would presumably apply with equal force to all others so organized, several million Baptists and Disciples with equal finality appear to be brought to a dead stop in any movement toward organic union with any church other than one congregationally organized, or differing at any important doctrinal point. In this circumstance, these great sister churches of ours might wish to associate themselves with us in the effort to determine just what as congregationally-ordered churches our powers are—where they begin and where they end. This might be feasible in one or both of two ways. The first might be to create parallel or even joint commissions on church polity, to explore the question with us from all points of view. The second might be to associate themselves with us before the higher courts, if that is legally admissible, as *amicus curiae*, thus broadening the scope and significance of the action to the point where its vital importance for world Protestantism may become explicit. Whether the second of these proposals is legally possible I am not competent to

judge, nor whether the first would commend itself to Baptist and Disciple leaders. They are simply mentioned here as possible factors in a strategy for Congregationalism, broadly defined, at a critical time in our history.

I am sure it will be realized that in this section I am speaking solely as an individual Congregational minister, and not at all as a staff member of the denominational structure. The point of view here expressed is my own. This paper is no trial balloon which is being sent up by an official body in the denomination, which alone has power, through its representative processes, to determine policy.

III

The third major aim toward which we should direct our efforts lies in my own administrative field,—evangelism. It is to make an impact upon (1) the huge mass of the seventy million unchurched in our land, and (2) the unknown number of those in our churches for whom religious affiliation is merely formal. By their own admission 60 per cent of Protestants are little more than nominal church members. Of the remaining 40 per cent "active," we sometimes wonder how many are truly and genuinely *committed* Christians; people who would rather die than give up their Christian faith. It may very well be that many of these apparently nominal Christians would surprise us, if such an emergency should arise, by their allegiance to the church they have so largely neglected. It may also be, on the other hand, that many we have considered within the core of the Christian church might disappoint us. In either case the church must never forget that before it can become truly a *force* for evangelism, it must realize that it is a *field* for evangelism.

Statistics are notoriously unreliable in estimating trends and tendencies, yet they do say something. In common with some other denominations, such statistics as we have are not conducive to overmuch optimism. A net gain in membership of 1.7 per cent in a year (1949) is hardly sufficient to cause the devils to tremble. Each church may at this point supply its own statistics of growth; few if any of them can be considered satisfactory when measured against the urgency of the time.

Evangelism is, of course, both wider and deeper than its most obvious, overt task of securing larger numbers of new church members. No longer would it be agreed that the church is most evangelistic which has the longest and noisiest and most frequent revivals. Instead, we are depending in these days upon other evangelistic methods more suitable to our own time.

Concurrently with evangelism in a current strategy for Congrega-

tionalism we must aim at conservation. We who give most of our time and thought to evangelism are often accused of being anxious merely to add more names to church rolls already overgenerously padded with inactive and apathetic members. Let it be said here that we are equally concerned with holding those we have and those we win. We desire nothing more fervently than to halt the procession of those who march into the front doors of our church, go up our aisles to stand before our communion tables and confess their faith; then more slowly, but with disheartening regularity, slip out the other doors and join the "lost" people outside. As an organized movement the United Evangelistic Advance closed at the end of 1950. It was hoped that during the fifteen months of its existence this movement will have added five million new members to our churches on Confession of Faith. Whether it did or not, it is now time for us to consider whether there should be a successor movement to the UEA, just as carefully planned and prosecuted, but aimed at the conservation, the assimilation, the integration into the life of our churches of those who have been won.

IV

Many of us will recall with affection, as one of our favorite verses in Scripture, Ephesians 3:17. Combining the Revised Standard Version and the Goodspeed translation yields the following suggestive rendering: "Your roots must be deep and your foundations strong in love, that you may have power."

The Christian faith says that power is to be found in love, and nowhere else. Practically nobody believes that, or has ever believed it! But neither has man found any other source of power to bring divine order out of satanic chaos. The legendary tyrant did not believe it of whom the poet wrote:

My name is Ozymandias, king of kings;
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair.

But the works of Ozymandias are buried today beneath drifting sands. The Roman Emperors Vespasian and Titus did not believe it, but the Colosseum they built is a crumbling ruin, while the nameless Christians who suffered there turned their world upside down.

Practically nobody believes that love has the power to do anything beyond, perhaps, making people happier within the walls of a home. Practically nobody really believes that love has any cosmic, universal significance or application. Practically nobody—*except the few who have moved the world*, whose names are imperishably engraved upon the shining records

of humanity's truly great souls. St. Francis of Assisi believed it—and giving even his clothing back to his father, went out, with only a borrowed cloak to cover his nakedness, to serve the oppressed and the forgotten of his generation. Toyohiko Kagawa believed it—and turning his back upon a prosperous home, immersed himself in a ministry to misery in Kobe's slums, bringing out of it a book called *Love the Law of Life*. Supremely, of course, the Lord Christ believed it, from the day he committed himself to the task God had set before him to the moment on the Cross when in triumph he cried out, "It is finished."

What other law is there in which may be found power to win freedom instead of tyranny, or realism against escape, or hope and faith against disillusionment and despair?

Day by day, far-reaching decisions must be made by every one of us, as parts inseparable from the stream of human events. One can lose his personal freedom to tyranny, but one cannot lose *faith* in freedom, and still be fully a Christian. One can be caught up for a time in a society of escapists, but one cannot refuse to face up to reality and still be a veritable Christian soul. One can perforce be afflicted for the moment with disillusionment and skepticism, but one cannot doubt the long-run, ultimate triumph of faith and hope and right, and still remain unreservedly a member of the household of Christ.

"Choose your weapons," the world is saying, "for what may be the last battle. Find your sources of power." And the Christian replies, "Our roots are deep and our foundations strong in love, that we may understand Christ's love, and be filled with the very fullness of God."

T. S. Eliot's "The Cocktail Party"

Of Redemption and Vocation

NATHAN A. SCOTT, JR.

IN *THE COCKTAIL PARTY* T. S. Eliot continues to dramatize the issues of faith as they arise out of the stresses of modern experience—and with such a degree of success that one feels it may come to be regarded as the central event of that phase of his career which embraces his activity in the theater. Though it exhibits in several ways the interests that have informed his previous plays—the concern to revivify for our time the medium of poetic drama, the rejection of the conventions of the realistic theater—its special affinity is with *The Family Reunion*, for both are made notable by their having dramatized the religious problem without visibly relying on a structure of dogma. In neither play does Eliot attempt any such exposition of the doctrine or discipline of his faith as had been earlier contained in *The Rock* and *Murder in the Cathedral*. He seeks rather—by way of disarming his audience of whatever initial bias it may have against a Christian reading of the human situation—only to communicate an organic experience of which theology might provide an explanation and on which religion may build a discipline, but for the first apprehension of which no acceptance of dogma is required. A brief rehearsal of *The Family Reunion* may, therefore, provide us with a preparatory clue to the poet's strategy here and establish a useful frame of reference for the consideration of his most recent work.

In the play of 1939 Eliot presents his hero, Harry Lord Monchensy, a very modern young man who frequents the best resorts and hotels and who drives fast motorcars, in the grip of a neurotic malaise precipitated by the death of his wife; in their life together there had been no "ecstasy." Harry, numbed by "the sudden extinction of every alternative" and pursued by the Furies, returns to the family home, to "the point of departure," hoping to "escape from one life to another"—only to discover that

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The cold spring now is the time
 For the ache in the moving root
 The agony in the dark. . . .¹

Only to discover, that is, the necessity for rebirth—to which, however, he is not brought until after he has been led into the obscure background of his past by his aunt, Agatha. It is Agatha who discloses to Harry the failure that his parents' marriage was, of which he sees his own to have been a re-enactment and which is for Eliot only an image of the more general declension from which we are all sprung. The development of his crisis is, in other words, toward illumination: he is made to see the "sin where he begun, which is his sin, though it was done before," and beyond that, the truth that is required "in the inward parts." He becomes the consciousness of his unhappy family, "its bird," to be "sent flying through the purgatorial flame" for the expiation of their sins. So he goes away into solitude and silence, "somewhere on the other side of despair,"

To the worship in the desert, the thirst and deprivation
 A stony sanctuary and a primitive altar,
 The heat of the sun and the icy vigil,

in order to learn to love.

Eliot's intention here seems clearly to be one of exhibiting a common modern experience of breakdown and collapse as not, of necessity, utterly spendthrift of life, but as an occasion which, when it disabuses us of all strategies of self-protection, may prepare us for a new and different kind of response to "reality" or God. His focus rests, in other words (as we may see again in his most recent play), upon the "occasions" in the course of our common life on which we may experience through personal breakdown the "judgment," and through personal reintegration the "renewal," which are the central events in the Christian drama of redemption.

I

The present play opens in the London flat of Edward and Lavinia Chamberlayne on the occasion of a cocktail party from which Lavinia, having decided to bring her marriage to an end, has without warning absented herself. Edward has been left insufficient time in which to notify all the invited guests of the party's cancellation. And so, not having been reached by him, there have appeared Peter Quilpe, a young novelist and

¹ From *The Family Reunion*, copyright, 1939, by T. S. Eliot. Quotations reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

writer for the films; Celia Coplestone, a young lady whose name appears in society columns and who writes poetry; Alex Gibbs, a well-intentioned but fumbling gentleman who appears to have a connection with the Foreign Service; the socially prominent Julia Shuttlethwaite, who might well have been done in the New York production of the play by Billie Burke; and finally, an "Unidentified Guest" whose presence is not explained and whom Edward himself does not even know.

Polite inquiries are made after Lavinia, and all except Julia are sufficiently discreet as not to press Edward further, when he declares that she has gone to the country to nurse an aunt who is ill. The talk is generally in a minor key, and the guests, as though sensing the tension created in their host by his wife's absence, soon take their departure. With the exception, that is, of the "Unidentified Guest," who remains for another drink and to whom Edward suddenly feels impelled to reveal the true state of affairs between himself and Lavinia. It is, the Guest says, simply the desire of ". . . the luxury of an intimate disclosure to a stranger"; he assures Edward that he will survive the "humiliation"—"an experience of incalculable value"—and, before leaving, promises to arrange for Lavinia's return within twenty-four hours.

In the following scene which occurs only a few minutes later, we learn for the first time of the affair that Edward has been having with Celia Coplestone, and from which he would like now to be released. Celia, supposing Edward to be alone now that the guests have departed, has returned to the Chamberlayne flat. She has suspected that the story about Lavinia's aunt was mere concealment by Edward of the break-up of his marriage, which now, Celia feels, makes it possible for him to secure a divorce and for them to have their long-desired opportunity. But, to her dismay, Edward declares that, at his request, the "Unidentified Guest" is bringing Lavinia back on the following day. He assures her that their relationship "never could have been . . . a permanent thing: You should have a man . . . nearer your own age."

In the late afternoon of the following day Lavinia returns. There ensues an explosive domestic scene in which long-repressed resentments rise to the surface in bitter accusations and recriminations. Edward locates the cause for the failure of their marriage in Lavinia's inveterate wilfulness and domination, Lavinia finds it in Edward's apathy. They arrive at no conclusion: Lavinia suggests to Edward that he is on the edge of a nervous breakdown and ought to see a doctor, and he replies:

But I don't need a doctor.
I am simply in hell. Where there are no doctors—
At least, not in a professional capacity.²

In the second act, which occurs several weeks later, we find ourselves in the consulting room of the London psychiatrist, Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly (the "Unidentified Guest" of Act I), before whom the Chamberlaynes come. And in his role as "Guardian"—as analyst and priest—he proceeds to reconstruct for them their true situation. He points out that when Edward thought his wife had left him, he discovered to his surprise that he was not really in love with Celia and was not prepared to make the least sacrifice on her account—a discovery which, revealing to him that he had never been in love with *anyone* and was perhaps incapable of love, injured his vanity. And to Lavinia he shows that her discovery of Peter Quilpe's defection (Peter, though now in love with Celia, was formerly Lavinia's lover) was simply a discovery that she had never succeeded in winning for herself the love of another. "And now," says Sir Henry,

you begin to see, I hope,
How much you have in common. The same isolation.
A man who finds himself incapable of loving
And a woman who finds that no man can love her.

Edward catches his meaning and says to his wife: "Lavinia, we must make the best of a bad job. That is what he means." To which Sir Henry replies:

When you find, Mr. Chamberlayne,
The best of a bad job is all any of us make of it—
Except of course, the saints—such as those who go
To the sanatorium—you will forget this phrase,
And in forgetting it will alter the condition.

Meanwhile, during Sir Henry's interview with the Chamberlaynes, another patient has been waiting, who is now, following their departure, shown in. It is Celia Coplestone, who does not come to declare a "nervous breakdown," who does not pretend that her trouble is interesting, but who comes only to report an "awareness of solitude" and what, with some embarrassment, she admits to be a "sense of sin." "It's not," she says,

the feeling of anything I've ever *done*,
Which I might get away from, or of anything in me
I could get rid of—but of emptiness, of failure
Towards someone, or something, outside of myself;
And I feel I must . . . *atone*—is that the word?
Can you treat a patient for such a state of mind?

² From *The Cocktail Party*, copyright, 1950, by T. S. Eliot. Quotations reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

As she talks about her life to Sir Henry, she is brought to her relationship with Edward which, she says, ended in her discovery that they had been

only strangers
And that there had been neither giving nor taking
But that we had merely made use of each other
Each for his purpose.

Edward was for her, she seems now to feel, a wrong turning.

Sir Henry responds to Celia's confession by offering her two types of vocation, in dedication to which the soul may regain its health. The first (which has been elected by the Chamberlaynes) is one whereby we faithfully maintain the common routine,

Are contented with the morning that separates
And with the evening that brings together
For casual talk before the fire
Two people who know they do not understand each other,
Breeding children whom they do not understand
And who will never understand them.

It is a simple and unspectacular life for those (as are most of us) who are simple and without special gifts; but

In a world of lunacy,
Violence, stupidity, greed . . . it is a good life.

There is, though, another vocation, another way, which

is unknown, and so requires faith—
The kind of faith that issues from despair.
The destination cannot be described;
You will know very little until you get there;
You will journey blind. But the way leads towards possession
Of what you have sought for in the wrong place.

But, Sir Henry insists,

Neither way is better.
Both ways are necessary. It is also necessary
To make a choice between them.

Celia chooses the second way, the way of the proficient, and so consents to go to "the sanatorium," to leave, in fact, that very evening. Sir Henry's final words to her, as she leaves his office, are those with which he bade the Chamberlaynes farewell:

Go in peace
Work out your salvation with diligence.

In the final act we are again in the drawing room of the Chamber-

laynes' London flat, on a late afternoon in July two years later: the occasion is a cocktail party. Edward and Lavinia, as they await their guests, sit talking quietly, as a man and woman talk whose living together has yielded, if not love, at least mutual considerateness and a tolerable, comfortable kind of peace. And then the guests arrive, first Julia and Alex (who has just returned to London from Kinkanja where he was on a government mission), then Peter (who is now doing a film on English life in Hollywood which has brought him back for a few days to secure materials), and finally Sir Henry. Celia is not present, for we learn that she went out to Kinkanja to work in a nursing order among the natives during an epidemic, and was murdered during an insurrection—"crucified very near an ant-hill." And now we discover that the "sanatorium" to which Celia went was not a hospital in which, clinging to her own illness, she would seek a cure, nor was it a kind of monastic retreat,—but was simply a corner of the world in which to lose her life in the lives of others (as in all sanatoria there are not only those who are ill, but those who seek to heal), and by doing so to gain it. To this vocation her actual death is only accidental.

They are all stunned into reflective meditation, and as Lavinia thinks about the guests that are yet to arrive, she says: ". . . I don't want to see these people." But Julia reminds her that it is "your appointed burden," and the others are reminded that they must be off to the Gunnings' for another cocktail gathering. So they go, after drinking a toast to "the Guardians," leaving Edward and Lavinia to await their guests.

II

Here, then, is the play which, as I saw its New York production at the Henry Miller Theater, effectively provides the "continuous hour and a half of *intense* interest"—which is, said Eliot several years ago in his *Dialogue on Dramatic Poetry*, what we need for the resurrection of poetic drama in our time. It may not be the great "masterpiece of the modern stage," as heralded by certain reviewers in their usually monotonous ecstasy—though if it is not, it does not fail to be so for the reasons on which many of the dissenting reviewers have established their dissent. For all of its elegance of statement and gravity of conception the play does, to be sure, have certain faults, though they are faults that attach to what we may be safe in regarding as a really distinguished work of art.

We ought perhaps, first of all, to be mindful of the evidences of growth in Eliot's dramaturgy that it manifests, and they are considerable. The poet's speech contains perhaps less of the kind of "heightened" poetic language

(the absence of which many have lamented) than has been present in his previous plays, though one suspects that those for whom this has proved disappointing draw their criteria of poetic drama from the sort of thing that Maxwell Anderson, say, has done in the theater. Eliot may, however, be fulfilling, perhaps more truly than a playwright like Anderson, the traditional role of the poet in the theater by aiming only at a heightened, "idealized and perfected conversation."³ And so—though there may be those who miss the cadences and the music and the lyricism that appear so frequently in his previous plays—the more lightly stressed verse, the more relaxed idiom that he has chosen here is perhaps after all more appropriate to his medium.

A criticism frequently directed at Eliot in the past has been that, in failing to realize and interpret in his plays a significant social context, he has involved himself in a kind of contradiction. For he has sought to use the resources of the contemporary theater, whose central *raison d'être* consists in the explication of *social* ambiguity, for the projection of themes the force of which depends on the transcension of such ambiguity in the interests of a religious enterprise. Though such an objection has considerable relevance to *The Family Reunion*, it is much less appropriately applied, one feels, to *The Cocktail Party*, for at no point do its *dramatis personae* appear as socially discarnate intelligences being moved about a stage chiefly by the force of the poet's purpose. On the contrary, we feel strongly, always, the presence of a thoroughly realized social atmosphere and its impingement upon human character. This is of course precisely why it is being repeatedly called "a comedy of manners," which it is; and as such, it owes quite as much, as Stephen Spender has reminded us, "to the American as to the English scene." "In fact," he says, "in reading it I found myself repeatedly thinking that the party was not in London but New York. There are signs here of Eliot's returning to his American roots."⁴

There is still another, and perhaps more important, respect in which *The Cocktail Party* represents a solution, though partial and by no means wholly adequate, of a problem that has been raised for many in the past by Eliot's dramatic practice. That has been his tendency, in the plays, to divide his characters rather ruthlessly, as Miss Helen Gardner has similarly observed of the novelists Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh, "into those capable of religious belief and experience, and those who are apparently forever outside it. . . ." Miss Gardner's notation of 'the consequence of

³ Popkin, Henry, "Theatre Letter," *The Kenyon Review*, Vol XII, No. 2 (Spring, 1950), p. 339.

⁴ Spender, Stephen, "After the Cocktail Party," *The New York Times Book Review*, March 19, 1950.

such disjunctions in the cases of Greene and Waugh stands also, I think, with equal applicability for the Eliot of *The Family Reunion* and covers with perhaps somewhat less justice the author of *Murder in the Cathedral*. She says, "It leads to a double falsification of the artist's vision; it causes a writer to treat differently characters who are of equal importance to the structure of the book. . . . It substitutes a formula, often mechanically applied, for an artist's effort to understand and recreate living experience."⁵

One felt this sort of weakness very strongly in *The Family Reunion* particularly, where Eliot's juxtaposition of Harry, his hero of the spiritual life, against his fatuous aunts and uncles (who are, presumably, "types" of the unredeemed consciousness) was so extreme as to make the *raison d'être* of Harry's relatives, as characters in the play, not one of being but rather one of not-being. Which is surely rather an odd way of handling the *dramatic* situation. Harry confronts them, and when they ask for an explanation of his melancholy and disquiet, he replies:

But how can I explain, how can I explain to *you*?
You will understand less after I have explained it.
All that I could hope to make you understand
Is only events: not what has happened.
And people to whom nothing has ever happened
Cannot understand the unimportance of events.

And Harry tells them repeatedly that they are mistaken, if they suppose themselves really to exist. "One even feels," remarks C. L. Barber, "a certain indignation at the high-handed treatment of these fussy maiden aunts and bumbling uncles, because Eliot is continually taking advantage of them. He dismisses them as unreal without ever having created them. They are even made to dismiss themselves. . . ."⁶

Now, as I have suggested, this kind of fault is by no means so prominent in the present play, where Eliot at no point vents such unguarded malice upon his characters—though its presence to a certain extent does create unfortunate ambiguity. There is Julia Shuttlethwaite, for example, about whom Eliot's observations are at some points so damaging as to have impelled me earlier to suggest that she might well have been done in the New York production of the play by Billie Burke. For, as we meet her at the first cocktail party, she is marked by the same half-witted triviality, the same distracted ineptitude, for which Miss Burke as an actress has

⁵ Gardner, Helen, "Francois Mauriac: 'A Woman of the Pharisees,'" *Penguin New Writing*, No. 31, 1947, p. 103.

⁶ Barber, C. L., "Strange Gods at T. S. Eliot's 'The Family Reunion,'" *The Southern Review*, Vol. VI, No. 2, p. 394.

become so famous. This is the person of whom Lavinia remarks, on being told by Edward following her return that he suspects all the guests, and certainly Julia, disbelieved his story about her aunt in the country:

Really, Edward! You had better have told the truth:
Nothing less than the truth could deceive Julia.

But then, in the second act, we find Julia, together with Alex, functioning in a manner similar to Mary in *The Family Reunion*, as an "angel," as an element in the process of mediation whereby redemption is made available to the elect. She and Alex (who also undergoes in the course of the play a similarly radical metamorphosis) arrange for the introduction of Celia and Edward into the precincts of self-knowledge (i.e., arrange their appointments with Sir Henry). And we are disconcerted and confused by this, for Eliot's initial handling of her has been so damaging that we don't quite know what to make of her new seriousness when, in her role of "angel" or assistant to Sir Henry, she says to him after Celia's departure:

Oh yes, she will go far. And we know where she is going.
But what do we know of the terrors of the journey?
You and I don't know the process by which the human is
Transhumanized: what do we know
Of the kind of suffering they must undergo
On the way of illumination?

The central ambiguity of the play is, though, no doubt constituted by the figure of Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly, the "Unidentified Guest" of Act I. And that ambiguity consists simply in Eliot's curiously wrong-headed comingling, within the person of his therapist, of the medical and the spiritual metaphors. Sir Henry is not, of course, a *deus ex machina*, as many commentators have suggested—at least no more so than Dante's Virgil. Eliot's preoccupation with the principle of spiritual guidance, which is perhaps not easily assimilated by Protestant sensibilities, has certainly been one of the unifying strains of his mature poetry and goes back at least as far as *Ash Wednesday*. There is, in that poem, the "Lady" "who moves in the time between sleep and waking" and who makes solicitous intercession on behalf of the protagonist—as there is also Agatha in *The Family Reunion*, who, being "liberated from the human wheel," is Harry's guide, and whose abode (as with Dante's Virgil) is "in the neutral territory between two worlds." So now there is Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly, who can lead Edward and Lavinia and Celia to "that courtesy of the spirit which accepts the absence of spiritual consolations without complaint, and is content to wait in

stillness,"⁷ but who is not himself one of the elect. He says, therefore, to Julia, following Celia's departure:

. . . . when I say to one like her,
 "Work out your salvation with diligence," I do not understand
 What I myself am saying.

Julia replies, "You must accept your limitations."

My point here is that those who have objected to Sir Henry as a *deus ex machina*, because, in his role as "guide," he exists outside the action which embraces Celia and the Chamberlaynes, are guilty of an irrelevance; for they fail to grasp not only the sense in which the intercessor or mentor is a requirement of the Catholic economy of redemption but also the sense, more important in this connection, in which he is consequently *poetically* integral to any expression of this "economy" in dramatic art. Sir Henry is, one feels, for Eliot simply the "type" of that natural human wisdom by which, though not itself transfigured by grace, the soul may be led into the precincts of grace. And as such he bears essentially the same relation to the dramatic action of *The Cocktail Party* that Virgil bears to the central action of the *Commedia*. But that he should be a psychiatrist, and thus capable of being associated by us with what has often become one of the more illusory secular religions of our period is, it seems to me, extremely unfortunate; and one suspects that the consequence has been that the play has been apprehended by many of Eliot's readers and theater audiences as simply another psychological thriller, of which we have had such a large spate in the films and on the stage in recent years.

III

These imperfections notwithstanding, Eliot's chief comment on the human situation—which assumes the form of a restatement of the Christian conception of "calling" or "vocation"—registers with clarity and force. And here surely it is his theological standpoint that enables him to avoid the frequent error of those naturalistic analysts of the psychological problem who often seem to suppose that the mere achievement of relief from the constrictions of neurosis amounts to a re-establishment of the self's integrity—and who do not find necessary any real deliverance from disability into a special form of creative activity that is particularly appropriate for *me*. He manages, that is to say, through the logic of his play, to make clear the distinctiveness of the Christian insight into the integral relation between

⁷ Duncan Jones, E. E., "Ash Wednesday," in *T. S. Eliot: A Study of His Writings by Several Hands*, ed. by B. Rajan (London, 1947), p. 42.

"redemption" and "vocation." He sees, with the clarity of theological wisdom, that the catharsis in which a drama of personal life may issue is not used creatively when we are only persuaded by it to attempt some mere alternation of the external conditions and circumstances within which our lives are set: it is so used only when we are led first of all, as Emil Brunner has said, to accept gratefully "the place, at which I am now set, from the hands of Providence, as the sphere of my life, as the place in which, and according to the possibilities of which, I am to meet my neighbor in love."⁸

It is, indeed, the insight into the spiritual necessity of finding one's "place," and its correlative tasks, that is Sir Henry's gifts to the Chamberlaynes and to Celia; and his words are echoed by Julia, who on more than one occasion talks about "appointed burdens."

If, however, this basic Christian idea fails to gain fully persuasive expression in *dramatic* terms, one feels that it is due to a certain doctrinal incompleteness in Eliot's grasp of the Christian concept at issue here. That is to say, whatever there is of esthetic failure is, at bottom, theological. Lionel Trilling has recently indicated, I think with justice, the former failure, when he cites as the play's central flaw the decided imbalance created by Eliot's manner of setting forth the two "ways"—the way of the saint and that of the common householder—which, though presumably of equal value, do not appear equally attractive in the context of the play. In commenting upon the passage in which Eliot speaks of those who, having learned to avoid excessive expectation, keep the hearth (the Chamberlaynes), "breeding children whom they do not understand and who will never understand them," Mr. Trilling says:

. . . few of us will want to say much for the life of the common routine, the life without an eagle, yet we know we can say more than this. We know that it is both more wonderful and more terrible than Mr. Eliot says it is, having its moments of unbearable pain and its moments of glory. . . . And this failure of Mr. Eliot's to represent the habitual life is typical of modern literature, which, since Tolstoy, seems unable to realize the pains and glories of the nonheroic life.⁹

Mr. Trilling voices here, I believe, what must surely be felt by many of us: namely, an irrepressible conviction of the relative unattractiveness of the portion allowed by the poet to those who "build the hearth" as against that allowed to "those who go upon a journey." And I should like now to suggest that his failure to evoke from us at this point, as an artist, an act of imaginative assent may possibly be the result of his having neglected, on the theological level, to examine the eschatological dimension of the Chris-

⁸ Brunner, Emil, *The Divine Imperative*. The Westminster Press, 1947, p. 203.

⁹ Trilling, Lionel, "Wordsworth and the Iron Time," *The Kenyon Review*, Vol. XII, No. 3, pp. 493-494.

tian notion of "vocation." For surely we are, on the Christian view of these matters, as Dr. Brunner has again reminded us, not merely called "into the world but *out of it* as well. . . ." ¹⁰ But, though Eliot's handling of Celia and her "way" embraces this eschatological aspect, there is no similar suggestion of it in his handling of the nonheroic Chamberlaynes (which provides the more crucial test of his theological wisdom). In the life allotted Edward and Lavinia, there is no vertical dimension, there are no "moments of glory," and so we reject it as something too thin and gray to be either esthetically or spiritually quite valid.

IV

We have often been reminded that Eliot's works "are so consistently intricate that one rests on another and is involved with what was earlier"; not the least of his magnificent qualities, to be sure, is this "integrity," this wholeness and sureness of vision, of which the present play provides further ample confirmation. It is at several points constituted of themes and semblances of images to which we have been introduced in his earlier poetry. The world within which the Chamberlaynes are initially contained—its empty sophistication of meaningless cocktail parties, its moral neutrality, its isolation—reminds us immediately of the world of Prufrock and "the hollow men," though rendered here with perhaps somewhat less severity than earlier. I have already spoken of Eliot's continuing preoccupation with the principle of spiritual guidance, to which also corresponds his continuing interest in martyrdom, as seen when one juxtaposes Becket's action in *Murder in the Cathedral* against Celia's here. We also get several reverberations from the *Quartets* of his concern with the Christian dialectic of death and rebirth. But, most important of all, it is the admission of sin which he continues to insist upon, and, in his role as dramatist, it is the revelation of divine grace as emerging from elements of situation and character toward which he musters heroically all the tremendous resources of his art.

The printed text of the play, however, not having been available for very long, none of us has had an opportunity to live with it over an extended period of time; and the full disclosure of its "secret" must, no doubt, await our being favored with Keats' moment when several things dovetail in the mind to yield enlargement of vision. But in the meantime we may be thankful, as F. O. Matthiessen a few years ago hoped would be the case, that "despite the long interruption of the war, and the isolating rigors of Eliot's thought . . . his play-writing is not yet a finished chapter." ¹¹

¹⁰ Brunner, Emil, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

¹¹ Matthiessen, F. O., *The Achievement of T. S. Eliot*. Oxford University Press, 1947, rev. ed., p. 175.

The Preacher and His Greek New Testament

RICHARD M. L. WAUGH

A STUDY OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT is a delight to every lover of the Word of God. But to the preacher such a study is both a delight and a source of enrichment. What a strange thrill there is in discovering new light breaking forth from the Sacred Scriptures! There is hardly a chapter in the New Testament that does not flash with an added glory when it is studied in the light of recent archeological discoveries.

When the American troops were located for a while in Northern Ireland during the last war, they were welcomed as friends into many homes. It was a joy and privilege to have them. Just about that time the writer of this article made an interesting discovery. Paul used a verb ἐπισκηνώω in II Cor. 12:9 which the historian Polybius employed for the billeting of soldiers in private houses. Paul had been referring to "a thorn in the flesh"; and in spite of this affliction he adds, "Most gladly will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (ἐπισκηνώσῃ ἐπ' ἐμέ). Though the phrase can be translated "spread a tabernacle over me," we are warranted in thinking that in our afflictions Christ with all his adequate resources and tender sympathy will come and make our hearts his home. We thereby experience what Von Hügel called "an overflowing interior plenitude."

There are delicate shades of meaning in the Greek original which will illuminate many a well-known passage. The very order of the Greek words is important. For instance, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews opens his treatise with the words πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως ("by divers portions and in divers manners") in order to give an added emphasis to the variety and imperfection of the earlier revelations, as contrasted with the complete and perfect revelation in him who was God's own Son. Every detail in the text is worthy of careful examination. In Heb. 1:2 the absence of the article in the phrase ἐν υἱῷ ("in a Son") draws attention to the nature rather than to the personality of the Mediator of the new revelation.

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To the reader of the English version, the importance of a prefix or the intensification of a verb may not be apparent. *ἔρχομαι*, for example, has ten different prefixes modifying the meaning, "come." We are informed in Mark 10:21 that "Jesus looking upon" the rich young ruler "loved him." The Greek word here (*εμβλέπω*) signifies "looking into," or, as we would say, "looking searchingly at." It is the same word that is used about the maid of the High Priest who looked Peter up and down and remarked, "Thou also wast with the Nazarene." Jesus must have had wonderful eyes. Usually the Evangelists are silent about the appearance of their Master. It is, therefore, all the more significant that they refer several times to his looking at people, or looking round about him. Mark has no less than three expressive words suggesting the sense of awe and wonder which filled the hearts of those who either listened to Christ's gracious words or gazed at his marvelous works.

Many Greek verbs are used in an intensified form, and this, too, must be observed. The treachery of Judas is clearly portrayed in the English words, "And straightway he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Rabbi; and kissed him." (Matt. 26:49) But when we find that *κατά* is attached to *φιλέω*, with the meaning "to kiss fervently" (R.V.m., "kissed him much"), and when we find in a papyrus that the same verb is used about a person who kissed the hand of another in a passion of gratitude, the treachery of Judas appears all the more despicable. Likewise, in the inimitable story of Jesus blessing the little children, we have an intensive compound employed. What a charming picture Mark gives us in his Gospel of our Lord, not only blessing (*κατευλόγει*) little children, but embracing (*ἐναγκαλισάμενος*) them! (Mark 10:16) When Paul tells his Corinthian friends to "attend upon the Lord without distraction" (I Cor. 7:35), he uses a compound word (*εὐπάρεδρος*) which literally means "sit well beside." If the Comforter is to help us in our time of need, we must still hold closely to him. His gentle voice—soft as the breath of even—can whisper words of guidance and strength. We, too, can come boldly (*παρρησία*, literally "telling everything") unto the throne of grace. (Heb. 4:16)

It is well worth while to give careful observation to the double compounds of Paul. When he writes, "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmity," he uses a verb (*συναντιλαμβάνεται*) which was widely employed throughout the whole of the Hellenistic world. It literally means "take hold along with." If we have to push something heavy, it makes a tremendous difference if some stronger person comes to our aid. The Holy Spirit, whose glory is extolled in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, is said by Paul

to come to our very side to support us in our weakness. Especially is this so in the matter of intercession, for our prayers are so often ineffective. Again, when the Apostle Paul informs the Thessalonians that he prayed night and day "exceedingly" (I Thess. 3:10), he uses another strong compound (*ὑπερεκπερισσού*). This is the same adverb that is found in the sublime Doxology in Eph. 3:20, where God is referred to as being able to do "exceeding abundantly" above all that we ask or think. Although Paul nourished his soul with a living faith in the mighty power of God, yet he knew also that it was only through intense wrestling in earnest prayer that his friends in Thessalonica could be equipped with spiritual strength to meet the trying demands of their day.

The preacher can find many luminous suggestions in Greek superlatives. Paul seems to revel in words like *ὑπερβάλλω*, *ὑπερπλεονάζω*, *ὑπερυψώω*, *ὑπεραυξάνω*, etc. The vast resources of a pagan empire or the widespread ramifications of evil never depressed him who was convinced that God highly exalted (*ὑπερύψωσεν*) Jesus. (The aorist shows that the reference is to the historical fact of the Resurrection.) It is the Father's gracious favor (*ἐχαρίσατο*) to make the crucified Redeemer the enthroned Lord, before whose majesty all creation should bow (Phil. 2:9-10). Does not the preacher today often lose the thrill of visualizing the majestic Christ, who receives the worship which belongs to the Eternal? If God is on our side, what does it matter who is against us?

It is interesting to pursue Paul's use of the preposition *συν*. Someone has calculated that he mentions sixty of his friends in his letters and that the Book of Acts refers to twenty of them. Though the number mentioned in Acts hardly amounts to so many, yet it is very evident that the apostle had numerous friends. Some are delightfully described as "beloved" (*ἀγαπητός*), whilst others are revealed as intimate workers with him in Christian service. The many *συν* compounds open up a useful line of thought.

For instance, a happy analogy can be recognized between the relationship of Paul's friends to the apostle and that between Paul and his Lord. In each case God is seen at work. (1) There is a *common Cause to be served*. A friend is termed a *συστρατιώτης* or a *σύνδουλος*. Paul says of some Philippian women in Phil. 4:3, *συνήθλησάν μοι μετὰ*, as if they strenuously exerted themselves along with him in a great athletic contest. Similarly, Paul considers that he is linked with Christ in a glorious Cause. *ὑπὲρ χριστοῦ πρεσβεύομεν*—"We beseech you on behalf of Christ" (II Cor. 5:20): *εἴπερ συμπάσχομεν, ἵνα καὶ συνδοξασθῶμεν*—"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him." (Rom. 8:17) (2) In each case *sacrifice is transformed*

by friendship. Though medical men could command high fees in apostolic times, Luke ("the beloved physician") kept by the side of Paul in Philippi, accompanied him to Jerusalem, watched over him in his imprisonment, sailed with him to Rome, and proved a loyal friend to the last. It took no small courage for Onesimus to return to Colossae and for Philemon to forgive his dishonest slave. But Paul had a wonderful way with him. It was a dim reflection of the manner in which Christ was able to make the apostle gladly suffer the loss of all things. The love of Christ "constrained" him (*συνέχω* is used in Luke 22:63, of "keeping a firm hold of" Jesus when he was arrested).

Love took up the harp of life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

When Paul spoke of "gaining" Christ, he used a verb (*κερδαίνω*) which is found in James 4:13, with the meaning "to gain a profit in a commercial transaction." His friendship with the Risen Lord transformed every sacrifice into a privilege. (3) Once more, the analogy holds good in regard to *immortal influence*. When Paul chose Phoebe to convey the Epistle to the Romans, or when Epaphroditus risked his life for the apostle, they did not dream of the immeasurable value of their service. Their names and work are imperishably preserved. Similarly, an aged prisoner did not conceive that the letters which he wrote in his cell and the sacrificial service which he counted a joy to render would prove the means by which his living Lord would become a priceless treasure to people of succeeding generations and of all lands.

Sometimes the use of a particular Greek word will enable a preacher to illustrate a familiar fact from a fresh point of view. In Acts 8:4 we read "They therefore that were scattered abroad (*διασπαρέντες*) went about preaching the word." We know that *διασπείρω* is the usual word for "sowing" seed. The verb has a peculiar aptness in this passage, for a glorious harvest was afterwards to be reaped, inasmuch as the persecution of the Christians led to a widespread sowing of the seed of the Divine Word. Another picturesque word lights up a passage in Gal. 3:5, where Paul writes, "He that supplieth (*ἐπιχορηγῶν*) to you the Spirit." This verb was used in early times in connection with a generous benefactor who "provided" out of his own pocket the expenses for a chorus in a theater. The intensive *ἐνί* brings out the idea of "abundant supply." Our Heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit in all his fullness that we may be transformed into the image of Christ. The use of a singular or plural is well worth attention. "Simon, Simon," said our Lord, "behold Satan obtained you (*ὑμᾶς*) by asking that he might

sift you as wheat; but I made supplication for thee (περὶ σοῦ) that thy faith fail not." We observe here the personal concern which our Lord had for Peter. Moreover, if the aorist ἐξηγήσατο suggests that Satan succeeded in his petition, equally does the aorist εἰδήθην imply that at the very same time Christ interceded for his wayward and impulsive disciple.

The importance of observing the variation of tenses is well illustrated in Rom. 6:13, though neither the A. V. or the R. V. discloses the difference. μηδὲ παριστάνετε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὅπλα ἀδικίας τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ. As the present active imperative of the verb is used here, we might translate it thus: "Do not go on presenting your members unto sin as weapons of unrighteousness." This is followed by a call to dedication in one decisive act: ἀλλὰ παραστήσατε ἑαυτοὺς τῷ θεῷ—"But present yourselves to God." The first aorist active imperative implies that one resolute effort should be made. This gives the preacher an opportunity for driving home the appeal for immediate dedication. In this connection the observance of the occasion when a verb is in the middle voice sometimes suggests to the speaker that a great responsibility rests on those who hear the message. For instance, σπουδάσατε βεβαίαν ὑμῶν τὴν κλήσιν καὶ ἐκλογὴν ποιῆσθαι ("give diligence to make your calling and election sure") (II Pet. 1:10). As the last verb is in the middle voice, it is to be implied that the readers of the Epistle are to make an effort themselves. Though Christ has called them, the responsibility of responding is theirs. The personal implication of the middle voice is seen from another angle in connection with our Lord. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says of him, "When he had made (ποιησάμενος) purification of sins . . ." (Heb. 1:3) The middle here suggests that Christ himself in his own Person made the purification. As Dr. Westcott says, "he did not make it as something distinct from himself, simply provided by his power."

The Greek language is full of little graphic touches and delicate shades of meaning. Take, for example, Mark 5:28: ἔλεγεν γὰρ ὅτι Ἐὰν ἅψωμαι κἂν τῶν ἱματίων αὐτοῦ σωθήσομαι ("for she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole"). The imperfect tense of the first verb implies that the unfortunate woman kept on repeating to herself this word of faith. It reminds us of how wholesome and stimulating a practice it is to repeat over and over again some hopeful and positive affirmation like "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13) Many psychologists recognize the healing value of suggestion. The great characteristic of the prayers of the early Christians was thanksgiving. Ignatius described a public service as "a meeting for thanksgiving." Origen advised his fellow Christians to open their public worship with thanksgiving. And even when a Christian was

detained in a prison and his plans upset for preaching the gospel to every creature, he wrote to his friends at Philippi and said, "Rejoice in the Lord alway. . . . In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving (μετὰ εὐχαριστίας) let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. 4:4, 6) This word was frequently used in the papyri for "gratitude" after a human benefactor had helped a friend.

The observance of the present tense of ἔρχομαι in John 14:18 reminds us that the A. V. is incorrect in translating, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." Our Lord is coming now to every heart that welcomes him. Again, if the preacher is expounding John 15:16, he will notice that three present active subjunctives are used with ἵνα to emphasize the continued realization of the purpose of Christ. As heralds of the gospel and as those who would seek to ensure the perpetuity of the church, Christ's disciples must *keep on going* (ὑπάγῃτε), *keep on bearing fruit* (καρπὸν φέρῃτε), and *keep on producing such fruit as would last* (μένῃ).

It is a solemn and challenging thought for the preacher to remind himself that he stands in the pulpit as the representative of the living Christ. Some of his congregation need comfort, some require guidance, and still others have not yet had an experience of salvation. How it strengthens the gracious promise in John 6:37 to notice in the original the strong double negation, οὐ μὴ ἐκβάλω ἔξω. Though our Lord said that he would "cast out" (the same Greek word) the prince of this world (John 12:31), he would in no wise whatsoever cast out the man who came in penitence and faith to him. Similarly, the tenderness and beauty of another promise (Heb. 13:5) is enhanced as we examine the Greek: οὐ μὴ σε ἀνῶ οὐδ' οὐ μὴ σε ἐγκαταλείπω. We observe here no less than five negatives. We might paraphrase the sentence: Never, never, never, never, under no circumstances whatsoever, will I desert you." But the Greek has something more to reveal. ἀνήμι is used in Acts 16:26 about the loosing of prisoners' chains: and ἐγκαταλείπω is found in Matt. 27:46 in reference to our Lord's cry of dereliction on the cross. A poignant sense of helplessness overclouded his mind. Though at that time he felt himself forsaken, yet now, as our triumphant Lord and ever-present Friend, he will never, never, never loosen his hold of all who trust in him; and in no wise will he leave us in an utterly helpless condition. This is a verse brimful of spiritual nutriment.

If a preacher is to be impressive, he must, as far as possible, avoid abstract terms. Our Divine Teacher set us a great example in clothing so much of his truth in picturesque language. His parables were illuminating and even his miracles were signs (σημεῖα). It is well worth while for the

ambassador of Christ to examine the metaphorical terms that may be hidden away in the original. We turn to II Tim. 1:6 for an illustration. Paul tells Timothy to "stir up the gift of God." *Ἀναζωοποιεῖν* (which occurs only here in the New Testament) means to rekindle or keep blazing. John Wesley makes this comment about the verb in his "Notes on the New Testament": "Literally, blowing up the coals into a flame." We may recall how the brother of that famous evangelist worked out the theme in perhaps his greatest hymn:

Still let me guard the holy fire,
And still stir up thy gift in me.

Similarly, it repays a preacher to notice the original verb in a fine text like "let no man rob you of your prize." (Col. 2:18. *καταβραβεύω* refers to the action of an umpire in the great athletic games who disqualifies a surprised and apparent winner for a technical breach of the rules. A forceful and interesting sermon can be preached on this picturesque phrase.

It is a most faithful method to compare the different uses to which the same Greek word may be applied. Take our Lord's call, as recorded in Mark 8:34: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself" *Ἀπαρνέομαι*, which is translated "deny" here, is an intensive form of *ἀρνέομαι*. It is used in our Lord's reference to Peter, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny (*ἀπαρνῆσθαι*) me thrice." (Mark 14:72) Now the meaning of that denial is crystallized in the phrase, "I know not the man." It follows, therefore, that whosoever would follow Christ must be willing to say to the self that seeks flattery, indulgence, and priority, "I know you not." When self is ignored and Christ becomes all in all, there is a new creation. Nothing but the transforming friendship of Christ can accomplish that change.

Finally, many original and profitable sermons can be made out of Greek words whose meaning has been lit up by our knowledge of the papyri. Wordsworth, longing for the recovery of the works of an early writer, said:

O ye who patiently explore
The wreck of Herculanean lore,
What rapture! Could ye seize
Some Theban fragment, or unroll
One precious, tender-hearted scroll
Of pure Simonides.

The young preacher who ploughs his way through the vocabulary of the Greek New Testament and reads the books unfolding the latest archaeological discoveries will find treasure untold. Deissmann said that the

number of words peculiar to the New Testament is about fifty, or to state it in another way, one per cent! It was a thrilling experience for him to discover from a study of the papyri that the language of the New Testament was the vernacular Greek, and not the language of contemporary literature. The Gospels and Epistles were written for the common people, and in words which were very familiar to them. Ὑπόστασις ("title-deeds") in Heb. 11:1; ἀπέχω ("signing a receipt") in Matt. 6:2; παρουσία ("a royal visit") in I John 1:28; ὑποπιύζω ("strike under the eye," hence "give a black eye") in I Cor. 9:27 and (metaphorically) in Luke 18:5; and a host of other words are all delightfully illustrated in the papyri.

In view of the use of μακάριος ("Oh, the happiness of") in sepulchral inscriptions, we turn with eagerness to Rev. 14:13: μακάριοι οἱ νεκροὶ οἱ ἐν Κυρίῳ . . . ἵνα ἀναπαύσονται ἐκ τῶν κόπων αὐτῶν ("Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord . . . that they may rest from their labors"). At first we might wonder how life could be so blissful in heaven if the saints cease from all work, for creative achievements add an interest to life. But then we note that the word for "labors" (κόπος), which is sometimes translated "weariness," really implies exhausting toil. From that kind of lassitude the blessed dead are exempt.

Many originally constructed sermons can be framed from the various contexts in which a particular Greek word is found in the papyri. In seeking to restore harmony amongst the members of the Philippian church, Paul wrote: "Work out (κατεργάζεσθε) your own salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. 2:12) Here we find a most picturesque word written in an intensive form. It is frequently used by Paul, especially in his Epistle to the Romans. Its general meaning is to "bring to completion." For instance, in Rom. 7:18 we read, "for to will is present with me; but how to κατεργάζεσθαι that which is good I find not." The Apostle is unable in his own strength to give a practical expression to the beautiful aims which he cherishes. The finishing touch is lacking, because there is no effective power apart from God.

Now κατεργάζεσθαι was employed in various relationships in early times. The papyri afford us ample material wherewith to construct a fresh and arresting sermon, say, on the text Phil. 2:20. The Greek word was (1) *an agricultural term*. Farmers used it when they cultivated land, in order to produce a good crop. Allotment holders likewise employed it. The members of the church are also engaged in sowing. "He that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." We are in this world cultivating the capacity for enjoying God and building up a spiritual body

for the great hereafter. The sowing begins at the cradle and ends at the grave. Then after death comes the harvest. We can thus realize the importance of the statement, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7-8)

(2) *A manufacturer's term.* Not only was the verb used for the preparation of food and the making of honey, but it was also the term employed for the preparation of timber for various uses. Wood can be so finished and polished that as a seat it can afford rest to the weary; or, as part of a musical instrument, it can afford pleasure and inspiration to the depressed; or, again, as a simple cross, it can remind men of the pardoning love of God. What a multitude of lovely and useful things are made out of wood today! Nothing is more needed than the development of character so that it becomes beautiful. The rough edges of selfishness, pride, and ill will can be removed by the Holy Spirit. The Christian has to "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." (Titus 2:10) The heavenly love of Christ must beautify every believer and transfigure his every duty and relationship. Love is the supreme grace.

(3) *A civic term.* The papyri afford numerous instances of men who, at considerable risk, "worked out" high moral principles into their public life. Though Christian ideals have made their way into many departments of the world, they have yet to be made dominant. There are corporate sins as well as individual ones. Christianity is not to be confined to public worship; it must make its way into the home and into the office, into sport and into industry, into film studios and into international conferences. Similarly, many other picturesque Greek words can be impressively treated.

God's Word is like God's world—very rich, very varied, and very beautiful. The great preachers of the past were noted for their expository preaching. Though many modern translations are most illuminating, nothing can set the heart of the preacher today so aglow with delight as the discovery in the original language of some new presentation of an over-familiar text. He is a happy man who can combine accurate exegesis with spiritual insight and a fresh interpretation of some glorious theme with a relevant application of it to the days in which he lives.

Book Reviews

Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther. By ROLAND H. BAINTON. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950. Winner of The Abingdon-Cokesbury Award. pp. 422. \$4.75.

Martin Luther is one of the most controversial figures in history. "This devil in the habit of a monk," declared the Edict of Worms, "has brought together ancient errors into one stinking puddle and has invented new ones. . . . His teaching makes for rebellion, division, war, murder, robbery, arson, and the collapse of Christendom. He lives the life of a beast. . . . No one is to harbor him. His followers also are to be condemned. His books are to be eradicated from the memory of man." The papal nuncio reported, however, that the popular estimate of Luther was quite the reverse. In the cartoons, which were being eagerly bought and widely circulated as the Diet met, he declared, "Martin is pictured with a halo and a dove above his head."

During the intervening centuries the controversy over this arresting personality has not abated. This is especially true of our own time, when men increasingly are recognizing that the movement which he initiated is related very intimately to the present plight of mankind. On the one hand the work of Luther is being portrayed as the seed-plot from whence authoritarianism has grown, and on the other hand he is regarded as the father of modern individualism. There are those who hold him responsible for the destruction of the fabric of society and regard the Reformation as the source of all the ills which plague the modern world; and there are those who believe that a rediscovery and renewal of the faith of the Reformers is the necessary prerequisite to the reconstruction of our common life.

Quite obviously such conflicting opinions can have arisen only through ignorance or the perversion of historical facts to serve the interests of partisan propaganda. A re-examination of Luther's life and thought is imperative, therefore, if we are to understand from whence we have come and whither we may be tending. Roland Bainton's *Here I Stand* is a major contribution to such a re-examination and re-evaluation. It is a book for inquiring minds who are seeking honest answers to the perplexing questions which have surrounded the figure of the German Reformer.

Luther's concern, Bainton points out, was almost wholly and completely religious. He gave no systematic attention to questions of politics and economics and in many practical decisions he was a prisoner of his time, a captive of historical circumstance. Even his role as a reformer of the church was thrust upon him rather than chosen, and the reshaping of its external order was an improvisation dictated by immediate necessities. Primarily he was a lonely soul in search of forgiveness, whose travail of soul and spiritual insight can be compared only to men of the stature of Paul and Augustine, Bunyan and Pascal, Kierkegaard and Dostoevsky.

Among the arresting conclusions reached by Bainton are the following: Luther constantly insisted that his controversy with Rome was not over abuses and corruption but over faith, and that he differed from previous reformers in that they attacked the life of the church and he the false doctrines of Rome. His whole intention was not to destroy the unity of the church but to preserve it from being shattered by an insistence upon papal innovations. Luther at Marburg was willing to practice intercommunion

with the Swiss until restrained by Melancthon, who thought such an act might endanger any possibility of reconciliation with the moderate Catholics. The formula of resistance which made Calvinism politically intransigent had its origin on Lutheran soil. The logic of Luther's thought made for a gathered church but practical difficulties made him turn to the princes as "emergency" bishops, an expedient which became permanent and "left the door open for caesaropapism, however remote this was from his intent."

Writing with complete candor, Bainton makes no attempt to gloss over the very human qualities of Luther, and as a Protestant, recognizing the extent to which even the wisest and best are involved in sin, he feels under no compulsion to transform Luther into a saint. Fortunately he combines rigorous scholarship with a real gift for literary expression, so that the book is a delight to read. Not the least attractive feature of the volume is its illustrations, contemporary woodcuts, cartoons, and drawings.

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The Catholicity of Protestantism. Edited by R. NEWTON FLEW and RUPERT E. DAVIES. London: The Lutterworth Press, 1950. pp. 159. 5s. (Paper).

This small, yet weighty, theological book, consisting of eight chapters and two appendices, was produced by a group of thirteen British Free Church theologians in response to a challenging suggestion made to one of the editors by Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, the Archbishop of Canterbury. In this group are distinguished representatives of the four major nonepiscopal churches in Britain—Methodist, Baptist, Congregationalist, and Presbyterian; yet despite well-known denominational differences they have managed to present a very clear and consistent account of the essence of Protestantism. This they have done in answer to a document, entitled *Catholicity*, issued four years ago by a group of fourteen British Anglo-Catholic scholars who set forth (again in response to a suggestion by Dr. Fisher) what they conceive to be the essence of the Catholic Faith as understood in their particular section of the Church of England. More recently the Evangelicals within the Anglican fold also issued their version of the Christian Message, under the title of *The Fullness of Christ*.

The Catholicity of Protestantism is an attempt to answer and correct the misunderstandings of the Protestant version of the gospel to be found in the Anglo-Catholic document, and seeks to show that the originators of classical Protestantism (Calvin and Luther) and their true descendants today are the inheritors and custodians of the genuine Catholic Faith. The spirit of the reply is admirable—we may even say ecumenical—and shows how far responsible Christian thinkers have moved beyond the *odium theologicum* of former years. The thirteen scholars who formulate this answer recognize that the misrepresentations in *Catholicity* were made in all good faith by sincere and scholarly men who, in their criticisms of Orthodox Protestantism, were probably "blinded by their eyes."

The book deals with topics which are of the very essence of Christianity and around which so many bitter discussions have revolved ever since the beginning of the Protestant Movement—the creation and fall of man, the nature of salvation, the antithesis between nature and grace, justification by faith *alone* and its relation to sanctification ("the very heart of the gospel"), the nature of the church ("actual, visible, and catholic, as the fellowship of the Holy Spirit" . . . "always constituted by the

Word of God and the presence of Christ"), the nature of the ministry (Protestantism, for all its varieties, has "a unified doctrine of the real nature and importance of the Christian ministry"), the validity of the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (which, in Protestantism, are true sacraments, and not mere "dead ordinances"), and the crucial question of spiritual authority ("ultimate and absolute authority in matters of faith can and must reside only in the Word of God, who was made flesh, died and rose again for our salvation, and abides forever in his Church").

In the concluding section of the book the writers express the hope that "in the continuity of the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church," of which Protestantism is an integral part, there may come "the clearer and increasing expression in the outward structure of the Church of the unity in Christ which is already ours," but they give a plain warning that the communions they represent will not submit to ministerial reordination as a condition of union.

Appendix I is an interesting (but to this reviewer a rather lame) discussion of Freewill and Predestination. Appendix II provides an illuminating and convincing exposition and defense of Luther's translation of Romans 3:28 (his doctrine of *sola fide*). This reviewer wishes that the writers had spelt the words "Protestant" and "Protestantism"—and also "Catholic" and "Catholicism"—with initial capitals.

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On This Rock. By G. BROMLEY OXNAM. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951. pp. 117. \$1.50.

The William Henry Hoover Lectureship, established by the Disciples Divinity House at the University of Chicago, is to be congratulated upon this the third publication in its series of lectures on Christian Unity. The two preceding volumes, by Bishop Angus Dun and Walter Marshall Horton, had explored the problem of church reunion on the level of theological insight. Bishop Oxnam's book, though it does not ignore the theological issue, presses on with a plea for action. "The subject of Christian unity has been talked out." "Our people are weary of discussion that has seemed to be a defense of our denominational ways rather than a discovery of His divine way." "Frankly, I am impatient." One of the great values of the book consists in its bringing us into judgment for our delay in our response to what we all know by now is a peremptory divine command. "I am convinced that the disputes of the theologians during the long centuries that are past will be continued throughout the long centuries to come, unless divided Christians who declare they want union turn from talk to action."

This reviewer is not as convinced as is Bishop Oxnam that impatience—even ecumenical impatience, if the phrase be allowed—will solve the unity problem if it means by-passing basic theological debate. The plea of urgency needs, quite possibly, to be directed precisely to our theological leaders. Activist churchmen, however, rightly witness to the fact that the unity of the New Testament Church was not founded upon scholastic unity documents, but upon faith in a common Lord. They rightly ask why we cannot return to this Rock of our common faith. "The basis of union lies in the declaration of Peter, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'"

Bishop Oxnam is convinced that the theological tensions which retard church unity ought, in all conscience, to be resolved without further delay. He is far less

optimistic about our ability to resolve the differences between Christians in the area of our common economic and political life. "The attempts to solve the issues that emerge from the relations of property may do more to divide us than the debates that center in the historic Episcopate or the Eucharist." That is a courageous diagnosis. Two movingly written chapters are devoted to analyzing its implications,—chapters which should invite the widest attention and which might have given title to the whole volume. Here a wise ecclesiastical statesman sets forth his political and economic creed as a Christian who is deeply disturbed over the social chaos of our time. These chapters deserve a separate review. Communism is discussed at length both as a judgment upon un-Christian capitalist dogma on the one hand, and as, of course, on the other hand a desperate threat to a free world. Roman Catholicism is likewise unsparingly exposed as clerical absolutism. What we are facing is, plainly, a challenge to preserve freedom under the lordship of the Christ of Christian faith.

The book is full of quotations—some of them long excerpts. These ought to enhance the value of the volume, since many of them are gems culled from the official literature of ecumenism which the layman never sees.

As noted above, this reviewer doubts that Bishop Oxnham's impatience with the theological embroilments which delay the reunion of the churches is quite realistic. The "lordship of Christ" is unquestionably the Rock upon which the church is founded. Theologians must themselves stand under judgment of the living Christ, not a scholastic substitute. Yet ambiguities cluster about the phrase and about its meaning in Christian life. Arians in the fourth century subscribed verbally to it, as do many Unitarians today. Problems of basic faith will have to be wrestled out before union can be meaningful, no matter how long such wrestling takes. Nevertheless, Bishop Oxnham's spur to action, and his glorious vision (detailed in his closing chapter) of the future inclusive Church of God ought to help us to "redeem time." Furthermore, his brutally realistic picture of what Christianity means in terms of a true church and a true gospel confronting our secularist world ought to speed reunion by placing us all under the burden of a shared fear of God and a shared repentance.

THEODORE O. WEDEL

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The Belief in Progress. By JOHN BAILLIE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950. pp. viii-240. \$2.75.

Dr. Baillie's book might seem to cover the ground traversed by Bury's *The Idea of Progress*, but is written from the Christian and not the positivist point of view. The author commends Bury's scholarship and follows him in the historical sections, but arrives at different conclusions. The idea of progress has now "acquired so firm a hold on Western thought that few minds remain unaffected by it." "We have all of us nourished this illusion in our breasts, if illusion indeed it be; and we are all involved together in the tragedy of its fading. What is left for modern man to believe in, if he can no longer believe that the future is likely to be better than the past?"

Dr. Baillie finds that while many elements in the idea are illusory, there is a core which is true, and this core comes from Judeo-Christianity. Hope first becomes a virtue in Hebrew thought, for the idea of history itself first appears in Hebrew literature. The New Testament adds the vital note of fulfillment, though still retaining hope.

He traces the idea of progress in ancient times—always cyclic, always referring to technology, always pessimistic; and after a review of the Middle Ages' idea of progress, presents in some detail the growth of the belief in modern times, beginning with the rationalists of the eighteenth century and coming on to the Marxists and emergent evolutionists of the twentieth. The idea of development grew to include man's mind and its capacities; was pushed beyond the pearly gates by Kant, made to include the universe as a whole (as by Spencer) and even God (especially as in Whitehead). The notion of progress was not an outgrowth of the idea of evolution, but the reverse. Dr. Baillie regards the whole idea in its modern form as a "highly speculative construction," and especially criticizes emergent evolution in all forms, on the ground that reality as a whole cannot grow. (The emergent evolutionist might reply that growth of reality is an observed fact, and regard Baillie's denial as in turn highly speculative.)

In Chapter 4 the grounds for the modern belief are examined and found wanting. The evolutionary principle for the universe as a whole, or even for man's nonphysical life and activities, cannot be based on biological evolution. (Baillie sides with T. H. Huxley against Julian Huxley.) The *a priori* principle of development, which "vitiate nineteenth-century history," is also baseless; and the advance in knowledge, relied on by the early rationalists as an insurance of progress, may just as well backfire and produce only disaster. Nevertheless, the belief in progress, which so far as it is false can be called a Christian heresy, has called Christianity's attention to elements overlooked in patristic times but which are implicit if not explicit in the New Testament.

The last chapter develops the Christian idea of progress which alone may resist the "acids of skepticism." The problem is set for the Christian in terms of the "pattern of the years of grace." As against Edwyn Bevan, who sees only the heavenly hope as essential to Christianity and who neglects the cosmic aspect of Christian hope, as indeed orthodoxy has usually done, and also in partial opposition to both the theories of realized eschatology and the radical theories of Schweitzer and Weiss—Baillie insists on New Testament support of the conviction of a victory already won (here seconding Cullmann), and of powers of the Spirit already given to us, which make possible real opportunities for growth of good in the years of grace.

No Utopianism can be called Christian, yet no pessimism either. On the whole, the modern belief in earthly progress, with all its weaknesses, was nearer to New Testament thought than the form of eschatology which contemplates the end of the soul but neglects any teaching about the end of history. Dr. Baillie ends with a fine philosophy of the Christian missionary enterprise, its success (in the large sense) being what Christians may look for as the solid hope of the years of grace.

KENNETH J. FOREMAN

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Soviet Politics—The Dilemma of Power. The Role of Ideas in Social Change. By BARRINGTON MOORE, JR. Cambridge, Mass.: The Harvard University Press, 1950. pp. xviii-503. \$5.00.

A noted French philosopher recently remarked: "They want me to refute Marx without showing that I have read him." It would be grossly unfair to charge Dr. Moore with political bias; he uses his vast material of Russian administrative and party documents without any preconceived ideas, critically to weigh the evidence

and draw a picture of Soviet politics. Unfortunately he believes he could do this without reading Marx.

His general problem is to find out how far a theoretically conceived program for social and economic reconstruction is modified under the pressure of political experience, of unexpected facts in the constantly changing constellation of power—this is his “dilemma of power.” His answer in the Soviet case is that Lenin and Stalin were pushed by conditions step by step to ever tighter controls. He summarizes his findings as “the contrast between the aims and the methods of the Bolsheviks. . . . The double paradox” that they “set out to achieve for humanity the goals of freedom and equality by means of an organization that denied these same principles.”

He is not aware that what he calls paradox is precisely the Marxian dialectic—the doctrine of the causally necessary movement of history through opposites. Marx regards the attainment of freedom and equality as possible but also as assured only in a completely homogeneous society of collectivized industrial workers. Marxists, hence, have to use all means to speed up that historically preordained happy ending. The future society is preformed in today’s industrial workers because, deprived as they are of private property, they alone are free to realize the dependence of their private welfare on the welfare of all others in the vast solidarity of world-wide division of labor. This understanding, however, while accessible only to the workers, is not actualized even by them, for lack of intellectual training; so they are capable at best of understanding “trade unionism”—a junior partnership in dying capitalism—but not the future life of socialism, which does depend on them for its realization. Hence the workers must be put under the strict guardianship of their “vanguard,” the socialist party (later the communist party), the small body of those who “correctly understand” the “real class interest” of the workers as distinguished from the empirical interest of the empirical workers. In short, only trained Marxists are competent to rule, and must rule with unlimited authority, as the trustees of final salvation, in order that the workers be raised to the level of “correct understanding” and all others be transformed into workers, so that in the end all will be equal and become capable of freedom without conflict. This is orthodox Marxian dialectic; where is Dr. Moore’s “dilemma”?

On the other hand, Marx had never thought of backward Russia as the country of his great triumph; he predicted his victory in the fully developed industrial countries. Dr. Moore, ignorant of the political doctrine of Marx, cannot discern either the originality of Lenin’s genius or demon, independent of Marx, in the doctrine of the revolution becoming impossible without outside interference in the strongly organized and hardened countries of advanced capitalism but being possible and necessary in the still plastic undeveloped countries, such as Russia (likewise China). Dr. Moore always takes the fundamental things for granted and limits his researches to the second and third levels. Useful and instructive as this is in many special problems, no problem of structure can be approached and understood in this way. Dr. Moore faithfully reproduces the Soviet version of why agriculture had to be collectivized, because his authorities do this; he thinks that collectivization was necessary for reasons of productivity, while there are even Soviet sources which prove that the economic justification is more than doubtful and the motives must have been purely political.

The author announces in passing that his inquiry into Soviet politics and power

will be limited to economic and administrative (and international) problems. So he does not get around to those areas of Russian life (besides agriculture, where the power of Marxism was really tested and checked and where it displayed its amazing art of turning a serious defeat to its own profit. These areas are the place of patriotic history in education, and the integrity of family life and of church life. Reared for one thousand years in the tradition of Byzantine Christianity, the Russian people are strongly conservative and authoritarian-minded and thereby disposed to follow a government which respects its basic convictions. The government, on its part, was enabled precisely by its economic interpretation of history to make temporary concessions on those "ideological" matters in the expectation that, once the economic "substructure" of atheism has been securely laid in the form of socialist economic institutions, the obsolete "superstructure" will gradually wane as people become more mature. All such matters are inaccessible to the author, however conscientiously he may have used his research methods; they require the more profound insights of scholarship.

A review article which will enlarge on the above suggestions is scheduled to appear in *Social Research*, March, 1951.

EDUARD HEIMANN

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Ideas and Men. The Story of Western Thought. By CRANE BRINTON. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950. pp. ix-587. \$6.00.

We used to hear it said that the study of history is a form of escapism. Yet with all our reasons for seeking escape today, can anyone really claim that our growing concern with history has anything to do with evasion? It seems rather to be true that more than ever before we are turning to history for the light on immediate problems and for the understanding of ourselves that we so desperately need. History has become both practical and philosophical. Each new book seems to make its significance more clear.

The present volume was written in the first instance for one of the Harvard courses in general education. The author is very modest in his claims for it. He calls it "a kind of guide book." It is this but it is also far more. As an "intellectual history" it deals less with the history of philosophy, of science, or of literature as such than with the relation of the ideas these disciplines provide to the way in which men have actually lived. The author admits having an interest in "the Big Questions—Life, Destiny, Right, Truth, and God." When he discusses these he communes with philosopher-kings. But he manages not to lose the common touch and he is most skillful in the way he shows how these ideas have worked at street corners and in the market place.

Professor Brinton, in other words, has succeeded admirably in doing the job he set out to do. He has traced the rise and fall of all the important ideas of Western thought, beginning with the Greeks, going on to the Christianity of early and medieval times, continuing with humanism and rationalism, and concluding with the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, and the cosmology of the nineteenth, and the anti-intellectualism of the twentieth. If there is an important issue that he has missed I have not been able to spot it. And I have marveled at the deftness with which he has handled the larger problems, making their complex nature clear, yet

extracting the meat and presenting it in such form that the reader becomes hungry for more. Surely this is the mark of great teaching. The style throughout is vivid, trenchant, almost colloquial in its informality, yet never unworthy of the dignity of its subject matter. This should be an admirable book to put into the hands of college students, especially if one wishes to influence them to major in history!

Readers of *RELIGION IN LIFE* will want to know how it treats Christianity. One must say first of all that it is objective, as history should be, and wins the reader's confidence on that account. Yet the objectivity never seems hard or cold or unsympathetic. The author writes as a person who knows his subject from the inside and approaches it with understanding.

At the end there are some excellent "Suggestions for Further Study."

JULIUS SEELYE BIXLER

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The Dignity of Man. By LYNN HAROLD HOUGH. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950. pp. 143. \$1.75.

A quarter of a century ago, Dr. Lynn Harold Hough was reviewing another's book, instead of writing one, which he usually is doing. He bore testimony that he had found the volume clear and cogent; that it roused and stimulated him and that its pages were studded with very discriminating bits of comment and telling bits of criticism. He added that the literary style of the volume, with all its pungent energy, held one's mind at sharp attention.

He closed his appraisal by declaring that the book was so good that he purposed to read it again. Then came this comment: "Sometimes you throw an author an adjective in order to get rid of him. If you go back to his book for a second reading it means that it really has something for you."

The Dignity of Man, the latest book by the one who wrote that review, had already become a twice-told tale for this grateful writer before he was asked by *RELIGION IN LIFE* to throw any adjectives at the author or, rather, at this little big book which, with a wealth of human understanding, erudition and spiritual insights, has come to the kingdom of thought and action for such a time as this. One feels like using all the phrases the author "threw" at another book twenty-five years ago, in characterizing this latest addition to the shelf-full of scintillating books with which Lynn Harold Hough has enriched his time.

It is because *The Dignity of Man* is a clear and cogent tract for these times and because its short, pungent chapters are freighted with telling bits of criticism and discriminating bits of comment that we urge those facing the perplexing and confusing problems of this spiritually lost and revolutionary day to read it at least twice. The twenty closely packed chapters contain the quintessence of all that Dr. Hough has thought, lived, taught, written, and preached. This master of Christian humanism, with a sure diagnosis of what it is that is poisoning and paralyzing our social order, keeps saying, "thou ailest here, and here." The "honey in the rock" is the costly fruitage gathered from the wide fields of the cultural past, in which the author is so much at home, as well as from contemporary scholarship, prophetic, and philosophic.

The book was written in the white heat of passionate conviction, most of it hammered out on the typewriter as a great liner crossed the Atlantic, homeward bound, with its author fresh from great British pulpits. Here is humanism with an evangelical experience and an evangelistic appeal, with the redeeming Cross in full

view. With withering scorn Dr. Hough pays his respects to a so-called theology which seeks to exalt God by degrading man and fouling the human nest. He tears away the refuge of lies which camouflages the specious promises of atheistic communism, and lays bare the fallacies of Karl Marx as he essays the impossible task of bringing in a brotherhood of "Comrades" in a world reduced to materialistic forms of necessity.

The Dignity of Man is an eloquent and convincing apologetic for the precious things we hold nearest our hearts, for which we contend as crude and cruel barbarians mount to thrones of power. The motif running through it is man's inherent dignity, which lifts him from groveling in the dust of self-depreciation and, even in the "far country," sets him upon his feet, "over nature and under God" with the awesome prerogative of free choice.

A grateful young preacher said, with regard to his debt to an older minister: "He threw me a bunch of keys and set me to opening doors for myself." Blessed is the man who catches from the eager hands of Lynn Harold Hough this "bunch of keys"; for they are the keys of the kingdom of grace and glory, the keys of the sovereignty of God and of the dignity of man.

FREDERICK BROWN HARRIS

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The Beginning of the Gospel. By T. W. MANSON. New York: Oxford University Press, 1950. pp. 114. \$1.50.

The Furtherance of the Gospel. By R. W. MOORE. New York: Oxford University Press, 1950. pp. 168. \$1.75.

The Truth of the Gospel. By G. B. CAIRD. New York: Oxford University Press, 1950. pp. 168. \$1.75.

These three small books are described as *A Primer of Christianity* in three parts, written primarily for laymen not too well instructed and not likely to read more elaborate works. They are, however, written by experts and are fully abreast of modern scholarship, though in the light of their purpose they attempt to be readable and constructive. Lists of books for further reading are given for Parts I and II.

Part I is by the well-known author of *The Teaching of Jesus*. It is, primarily, a brief commentary on the Gospel of Mark, based on a new translation, divided into short sections with appropriate headings and notes. Passages from Luke's Gospel, Acts, and Paul's Epistles are introduced at appropriate points. Manson's translation is unusually successful in rendering the meaning of the original Greek into its modern equivalent. The notes, though brief, often light up the whole passage. A valuable feature of the book is the introduction, which deals with Jewish history during the centuries before Christ, and in particular with the development of the Messianic ideal. Another section gives an outline of the high points of Christ's ministry, with special emphasis on the realization of the Messianic ideal. This is followed by a still briefer section on the Church. What was the effect of Christ's ministry on those who stood nearest to the actual events? This question is answered by quotations from Peter's speeches in Acts, from Paul's Epistles, and from the prologue of John's Gospel. The reader is left with the question, "What is the impression the ministry makes on us?"

Part II, *The Furtherance of the Gospel*, is by R. W. Moore, Headmaster of Harrow. A volume on the history of Christianity is included in the series because

Christianity cannot be fully understood apart from its working out in history. There is a need, too, for a small volume in which the reader can get a bird's-eye view of Christian history as one whole. It would seem to be an impossible task to write a highly readable history of Christianity from Pentecost to the present time within the compass of some 150 pages, and yet this is just what our author has accomplished. He has been able to do this in the first place by making a selection of events and personages, and in the second place by writing in a vivid and imaginative style. No doubt the author's experience with boys at Harrow has helped him to put things in a dramatic and effective way. His book is popular in the right sense, but it is none the less scholarly. It shows a fine grasp of the whole of church history and, on the whole, the selections have been well made. Writing in England, the author has naturally given large space to Christianity in the British Isles, but no really vital event or personage has been neglected. The whole story has been told with remarkable fairness. This reviewer has not detected any trace of partisanship in a volume which necessarily deals with many highly controversial subjects. There is a final chapter on "The Christ of History" in order to link the life of Christ with Christian history and with our contemporary world. This little volume is a splendid example of the teaching art and is to be highly commended.

Part III is by the Professor of New Testament at McGill University and deals with Christian Apologetics. The first three chapters discuss the necessity of a sound view of life, what the Christian belief is, the foundations of belief, the roots of doubt and the obstacles to belief. The rest of the book is given to an exposition of the Christian faith. God, the problem of evil, Jesus Christ, the Trinity, man and his destiny are all dealt with in as popular terms as the subjects permit. The two concluding chapters are on the "new man" in Christ and the new Christian community. It is evident from this brief survey how wide is the scope of this little book. It is inevitable that it should suffer, at times, from undue compression, but on the whole Dr. Caird's treatment is readable and illuminating. There are some keen insights and many felicitous phrases.

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The Kingdom without End: A Prophetic Interpretation of History and Civilization. By ROBERT ELLIOT FITCH. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950. pp. xiv-137.

The Kingdom without End that Professor Fitch describes in these eloquent essays is the community of men with God and with each other, shadowed forth in church and Christian civilization. The purpose of this community is the realization of spiritual values, especially love, beauty, righteousness, justice, truth, freedom and joy. It is distinguished from the kingdoms which have an end by its openness to the future and to the eternal, but never by lack of concern for the temporal; on the contrary, its members have infinite zest for the refashioning of earthly actuality. The middle chapters of the book describe the principle which opposes the spirit of the endless kingdom. Sin, which brings human empires to their end, is pride, appearing as pride of power, of possessions, of intellect, and of spirit. In the course of these reflections the writer offers pertinent comments on contemporary national,

economic, ecclesiastical and educational endeavors. In the first and last chapters, which form the framework of the whole, Professor Fitch sets forth his positive convictions about the nature of history. They are, in the main, that God is infinite creative activity and that man, made in the image of God, is a co-creator; that history is subject to the rule of eternal law and that therefore the life and death of cultures depend on righteousness.

The book bears the subtitle: "A Prophetic Interpretation of History and Civilization." Elsewhere in the volume the author speaks of this interpretation as the Christian view of history. He does not wish his work to be regarded as more than a "partial expression of a total Christian philosophy of history," yet believes that what is here presented "is so" and must be included in any complete Christian interpretation of history. This may well be conceded, yet the question arises whether the meaning of this "creativistic" and moral interpretation—here called prophetic—will not be profoundly changed when it is set within the framework of the sort of view of history which the Christian derives from the New Testament.

The question may be raised in this fashion: Can a Christian interpretation of history take its standpoint in the eighth century B. C. with the prophets of that era and look forward from that vantage-point, or must it take its standpoint after the exile and especially after Jesus Christ and interpret human events in full recognition of the fact that when "a kingdom without end" was made manifest it was put to death by man? Does a Christian dare to say to nations, individuals, or cultures, that if they will be righteous in the prophetic—or the Christian—sense they will endure? Or must he say to them that they may be put to death even before their time but will rise to newness of life in another than the temporal sphere? If he is forced to say the latter, then his interpretation of history will indeed need to include what Professor Fitch is stressing, the supreme importance of righteousness in all social action, of concern for personal values and for the glory of God; but its framework will be apocalyptic rather than early prophetic.

A further question to be raised is whether the combination of concentration on divine creativity with emphasis on moral judgment is indeed prophetic. The prophets doubtless glorified the Creator, but it was as Redeemer that God made himself known; and there is reason to believe that for them as for their successors, belief in the goodness of the One from whom all things came, including their own lives, was often a problem which could not be answered without reference to his redemption of what he had made. Not only Job but Jeremiah also curses the day of his birth; not only II Esdras but also Second Isaiah the reconciliation of men to the Creator of darkness as well as of light presents a tormenting question. And is it in any way clear that man's creative activity is divine, let it be ever so similar to something we observe in his larger environment or find described in our metaphysics? Out of it come the rare works of Shakespeare and Beethoven and 10,000,000 pulp magazines, 25,000,000 comic books a month, cathedrals and plastics, sonatas and be-bop, H-bombs, iron maidens and television. It is as often demonic as divine, more frequently tawdry than glorious. Beelzebubian rather than either Satanic or Jovian. If history is not the story of our redemption but primarily the story of creation, where is the glory in the Kingdom and the power?

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Responsible Christianity. By JUSTIN WROE NIXON. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950. pp. 190. \$2.50.

Dr. Nixon is sure that Christianity, if it would remain relevant, must reproclaim to modern man his "amphibian" nature, that he is a citizen of two worlds, both real, one of which is of earth, natural, and the other of heaven, supernatural; that man's uniqueness lies in his capability of perceiving the reality of the Invisible and Intangible. In short, Dr. Nixon would have Christianity go on being a religion and not attempt, overawed by current philosophies, to become a naturalistic morality bathed in opalescent fog.

He puts this point of view very well indeed, except that he sometimes so condenses his material as a little to obscure his thought. The book would be more clear and challenging if it were more leisurely and twice as long. It is distinctly worth study but not, at least for this reviewer, easy to read.

The author gives an analysis of the naturalism which has largely replaced philosophical idealism in contemporary thinking. This naturalism seeks to explain man by reducing him to the stature of a mere superanimal and so removes meaning from him, his thought, his action. It consigns man to insignificance and his achievement to oblivion. Man, it says, is the creature of mechanistic or chemical action; and the consciousness which he is romantically persuaded he possesses is the result of a congeries of glandular excitements, sexual or otherwise.

Naturalism is, Dr. Nixon rightly insists, not merely a theory for academic debate; it removes from democracy all valid sanctions, and from the loyalties of love, marriage, and the family. On the naturalistic basis a civilization based on right, justice, honor, duty, is impossible of preservation. And of course on a naturalistic basis religion is preposterous nonsense.

Man must be rescued from the stupefying aridity of naturalism. Christianity is "responsible" for helping man again to become conscious of his amphibiousness, for strengthening his realization that even as he is a citizen of here and now, so also he is a citizen of eternity. That man is amphibious and must not for sanity deny it, is, Dr. Nixon thinks, the essential teaching of Jesus Christ and therefore must be the keynote of Christianity.

The present reviewer is not persuaded of this last point by what Dr. Nixon has written. *Every* religion that has survival value recognizes man's amphibiousness. The unique contribution of Christianity is that it shows how easily and without strain the supernatural meets and illuminates the natural in the Incarnate God, in the Sacraments, in prayer through Jesus. A case could be made for saying that the current vogue of naturalism is by way of reaction against a supernaturalism discarnated and unsacramentalized. Perhaps Dr. Nixon will write us another book, about the originating causes of the naturalistic monster.

BERNARD TIDINGS BELL

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Christian Belief. By ALEC R. VIDLER. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950. pp. 120. \$2.25.

College students in England are evidently very much like those in the United States; they have no firm grasp of the fundamentals of the Christian faith. This book

by Alec Vidler, one of the important theological voices in England today, is an attempt to present the gospel in terms which will compel the attention of young people reared in a secular culture. It is the transcript of a series of Open Lectures delivered at Cambridge University, and is having a wide sale in England.

Belief is made no easy matter by Dr. Vidler. Christianity is not something which has all the answers in the back of the book. He quotes with approval the words of Schweitzer: "The highest knowledge is to know that we are surrounded by mystery." But Christian belief accounts more adequately for all the facts than any alternative, "and leaves fewer difficulties jutting out." Belief in God cannot be put into the form of a compelling argument from which there is no possibility of escape.

The various chapters of the book deal with "Belief in God," "God and Mankind," "The Work of Christ," "The Holy Spirit," "The Church," "The Forgiveness of Sins," and "Eternal Life." Some of these are topics you would expect to see discussed. Others strike American ears a little strangely. This is particularly true of the chapters upon the Holy Spirit and the Forgiveness of Sins. The former is a most moving statement, and leaves one wondering whether Christianity in the United States does not need to rediscover this great belief. Is not too much of our time given over to high-pressure promotion and too little to reliance upon "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord"? Many young men of ability are attracted to a preaching and teaching life work, but are repelled by the "wheels within wheels" with which so much time and strength are occupied by a modern pastor. Many ministers today, to judge from their preaching and general attitudes, seem scarcely "to know if there be a Holy Spirit."

The discussion of the Forgiveness of Sins, with its emphasis upon the Atonement, will also strike many of us in this country as a peculiarly English emphasis. Dr. Vidler seems put to it to append some of his more legalistic conceptions to the teaching of the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Why should it be more difficult for God to forgive than for man? "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us." Surely the love of God is wide and deep enough to blot out our transgressions and to remove them as far as the East is from the West.

The book is a heartening one. It marks a new strategy on the part of modern churchmen. It is not a defense of Christianity so much as a proclamation. The findings of science and biblical scholarship are assumed. The need for faith in God today, as always, is declared by a most persuasive voice. Dr. Vidler has an instinct for what is relevant; he does not deal with the side-issues of religion. It is to be hoped that his book will stimulate others of a like nature. It is time we challenged the best minds of the coming generation with a definite and compelling statement of what the Christian gospel is. This book is no easy review of Christian Belief. It is hard enough to be interesting. Any who accept it will know they are Christians and will also know why.

Simply as a footnote: It is most interesting to note the way in which Dr. Vidler, himself one of the younger Anglicans, leans back on P. T. Forsyth, one of the Free Church theologians of the early years of the present century. It was Forsyth who gave the "New Theology" of R. J. Campbell such a stern handling. He was, however, out of tune with the then current optimistic emphasis, but seemingly, as a result of two world wars, has come into recognition again. Is Forsyth due for a revival on this side of the Atlantic also?

JOHN GRATTON

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An Outline of New Testament Ethics. By LINDSAY DEWAR. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950. pp. 280. \$3.00.

As the title indicates, this is an outline of New Testament ethics, sketching in turn our Lord's Ethical Teaching, the Ethics of the Holy Spirit (based largely on Acts), the Ethical Teaching of St. Paul, Johannine Ethical Teaching, and the Ethical Teaching of Other New Testament Books. Although the treatment of the various topics is necessarily limited, the volume is tightly packed and rich in insight. The author's prime concern is to discover and expound the New Testament system of ethics and not to put the New Testament ethic into some modern philosophical mould.

One characteristic of the New Testament ethic, indeed its most constant factor, according to our author, is the theological nature of morality. For Jesus, and likewise for Paul, the touchstone of ethics is always the character of God.

The New Testament ethic, he finds, is also an ethic of the Holy Spirit, i.e., the way in which Christians should behave was progressively taught to them by the Holy Spirit after Pentecost, not to individuals as such, but to the whole body of believers corporately. The Holy Spirit likewise provides the power which is necessary for the realization of the Christian ideal.

In agreement with Professor C. H. Dodd the author believes that the ethical teachings of Jesus are not an interim-ethic, nor other-worldly, but rather the absolute ethic of the Kingdom of God. "They stand for the unattainable which we are bound to strive to attain."

The supreme motive and standard for Christian ethics in Paul, the Johannine literature, and indeed in the general New Testament tradition, is the imitation of Christ. This *imitatio Christi*, which lies at the heart of Christian morality, is most adequately described by the Greek word *Agape*, for which there is no English equivalent. It "stands for that outward-looking attitude of mind which makes God and our neighbor the center of interest rather than ourselves, and this carries with it, of necessity, the other two members of the familiar triad, faith (or trust) and hope. In these three theological virtues the Christian character is summed up."

At times (when dealing, for example, with the New Testament teaching on divorce) it appears to this reviewer that the author is unduly influenced by his Anglican tradition. But the book as a whole is based on sound and careful biblical scholarship, and provides a suggestive introduction to the study of New Testament ethics for both minister and layman.

ERNEST TRICE THOMPSON

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God and the Nations. Ed. by PAUL POLING, Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1950. pp. 128. \$2.00.

Symposia usually lack unity and continuity, yet some are valuable in spite of these defects. This volume falls in that class. Five competent people have contributed: Harry Rubin, Yale historian; Vera M. Dean of the Foreign Policy Association; Walter Van Kirk of the Federal Council of Churches' Department of International Justice; James P. Warburg, prominent banker and advocate of world government; and Pitirim Sorokin, whose new research center in creative altruism at Harvard has focused many hopes in the "co-operation" school of social theory.

The editor is Paul Newton Poling, Secretary of the social education and action division of the Board of Education, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. The book was written before the Korean conflict. It promises a study guide early in 1951, but one cannot be blamed for wondering how useful or relevant it will be. The volume is probably of more interest to groups studying basic policy-principles than to those concerned with tactics in a developing program (or lack of it).

Professor Rudin finds the cause of world disorder in nationalism, particularly in the death of free trade, and in attempts to solve economic problems within national boundaries, rather than in ideologies. "The *ism* meriting most condemnation is nationalism, for it explains why people turn toward Fascism, Nazism, or Communism." This seems an amazingly oversimplified thesis, even giving full allowance for the dynamics of *Lebensraum*. Rudin's emphasis on overpopulation and the limitation-studies of recent demographers is a good one, for too few people are enough aware of such factors. Students can ponder his warning that a third world war is too much for the world's economy to bear, and his implied warning, "If Christians do not find the answer, non-Christians must."

Mrs. Dean's thesis is already known, that we can understand and thus possibly coexist peaceably with Russia only by three devices: (1) rid ourselves of unreasoning and hysterical fear of Russia, (2) distinguish (and sometimes separate) Soviet Russia from Communism, and (3) cast out first the beam from our own eye when criticizing Russia's policies. In her chapter here she helpfully summarizes her longer studies in *The United States and Russia*, a Harvard series on foreign policy edited by Sumner Welles.

Dr. Van Kirk's essay is a fairly good summing up of the questions raised by proposals for an Atlantic Union (Federal Union) and a World Federation, and a brief statement (favorable) of arguments for provisional support of the United Nations. Wary students will recognize elements of moralism, as in his complaint that "nationalism" rises in the East (the colonial world) without any adequate explanation of the social lag which accounts for the "moral lag" in China, the Balkans, Southeast Asia.

In many ways the sharpest and most decisive writing is Mr. Warburg's. His criticism of United States foreign policy is summed up, by him, as "We are permitting fear of war and preparation for war so to preoccupy and so to pre-empt our resources that we are prevented from making our maximum effort toward peace." Study groups should certainly read his full discussion of this thesis in his recent *Faith, Reason and Power*, and his *Last Call for Common Sense*. He sees that to prepare for war will not prevent it; that the Point Four principle of economic sharing, and not the Truman Doctrine, is the only hope. (The tragedy, perhaps, is that our economy cannot support both militarization and the volume of aid needed to take the wind out of the communist propaganda sails.) Mr. Warburg gives warm approval to Senator McMahon's "peace bomb" of last February, which proposed to cut a fifteen-billion-dollar to a five-billion-dollar military budget and to turn the ten million dollars into a world economic development program. That budget has been tripled, but the principle still applies.

Professor Sorokin's chapter, with its nine theses, is the most challenging ethically and religiously. It is a clear-cut pacifist proposal, based on confidence in the "power" of creative love and nonviolence. In case of war, he says, Christians will "pray to

the all-merciful God to give them courage to be killed rather than kill." Mr. Poling could not have closed his symposium with a more trenchant and searching essay.

JOSEPH FLETCHER

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Psychoanalysis and Religion. By ERICH FROMM. New Haven: The Yale University Press, 1950. pp. vii-119. \$2.50.

The Dwight H. Terry Foundation at Yale University was established for the promotion of "Lectures on Religion in the Light of Science and Philosophy." This little book by Erich Fromm is the twenty-sixth in the series. The author explains that the thoughts here expressed are a continuation of those expressed in his book, *Man for Himself*, which was an inquiry into the psychology of ethics. He explains also that "the views expressed in these chapters are in no sense representative of 'psychoanalysis'." Neither, I would say, are they representative in any large sense of views held by religionists.

A first chapter, entitled "The Problem," deals with the relationship of psychoanalysis and religion. In this the author explains how the former became concerned with the study of "the soul," and he uses this term in preference to "the psyche" or "the mind" because "the word *soul* has associations which include higher human powers" (p. 6). He writes further, "Freud's method, psychoanalysis, made possible the most minute and intimate study of the soul. . . . In his 'laboratory,' relying only on observation, reason, and his own experience as a human being, he discovers that mental sickness cannot be understood apart from moral problems; that his patient is sick because he has neglected his soul's demands . . . as a physician of the soul he is concerned with the very same problems as philosophy and theology: the soul of man and its cure." (p. 7) This is radical talk for a psychoanalyst, for most have claimed that psychoanalysis is a method of treatment and investigation and has nothing to do with the field of religion.

In his second chapter the author presents the views of Freud and Jung upon religion, views which have often been discussed by religionists. The third chapter is entitled, "An Analysis of Some Types of Religious Experience." Here he defines his use of the term *religion* as "any system of thought and action shared by a group which gives the individual a frame of orientation and an object of devotion" (p. 21). This chapter is significant and challenging in that the author points out again and again that in certain acts of devotion the deep nature of the human individual is actually masquerading. What appears to be love may be hate, what appears to be devotion may be fear, etc.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter, however, is the fourth, "Psychoanalyst—Physician of the Soul." Here Fromm writes, "Analytic therapy is essentially an attempt to help the patient gain or regain his capacity for love" (p. 87). The author is not content, as many therapists are, to treat the symptoms of a person, but seeks the "development of a person's potentialities and the realization of his individuality" (p. 74). This seems to mean, to help him become a creative person, one whose life is lived with purpose.

In answer to the question which is the title of the final chapter, "Is Psychoanalysis a Threat to Religion?" the author concludes that it depends upon the nature of the religion that you are talking about. Psychoanalysis can contribute a great

deal to the realization of religions in which the supreme aim of living is a concern with man's soul and the unfolding of his powers of love and reason (p. 99). The liberal religionist finds herein a sympathetic ally; the authoritarian religionist, who moves and thinks, or thinks he thinks, of himself as a defender of the faith will be threatened by this book, and will be moved to attack it.

RUSSELL L. DICKS

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Religion and the Cure of Souls in Jung's Psychology. By HANS SCHAER.
New York: Pantheon Books, 1950. pp. 208. \$3.50.

Dr. Schaer has given us an excellent readable survey of the ideas in the writing of Jung, the psychotherapist who broke with Freud and founded his own school of analytical psychology. However, Jung's writings cannot be summarized easily, and a reading of the original works is still desirable for any who want to know him well.

Dr. Schaer stresses the work of Jung in the cure of souls. Jung did cast much of his thinking in these terms, and he was vitally interested in man's spiritual problems. This reviewer has no way of evaluating Jung's actual work in psychotherapy, but his reputation was certainly high. One would suspect that his effectiveness was due more to qualities in his own personality, including his profound respect for his patients and their problems, than to his interpretations.

There are two reasons for this. First, his ideas have not developed a prominent school of therapy. The major movements in psychotherapy today stem directly from Freud, not from Jung. Second, the interpretations developed by Jung seem more likely to lead into a fantastic view of life and of religion, rather than toward a view that leads to clear functioning and growth. This statement is not to be taken as a wholesale condemnation of Jung's formulations, but rather as an estimate of their value as therapeutic tools. It is significant that Jung left no clear application of his theories to therapeutic technique.

One basic weakness in Jung's formulations is his tendency to posit as fundamental elements of personality, aspects that are clearly derivations of emotional conflicts. Much in his theory of opposites and his insistence on the compensatory nature of all psychic processes would fall under this comment. His idea that ritual always serves to set free libido which man needs for his work ignores the clearly observable fact that ritual often is used to repress libido as well as anxiety. His ideas concerning the racial unconscious and its archetypes certainly need much clarification.

Yet there is much in Jung that is stimulating to the serious student of personality and the psychology of religion. Reading him forces one to think deeply about the spiritual manifestations of personality processes. His genuine interest in and concern for the welfare of persons as over against dead institutional forms is refreshing. His insight into the functioning of religious symbols and the possible meaning of symbolic processes for religion is highly instructive. His emphasis on the reality of psychic processes, and the need of understanding religious phenomena on the basis of psychic realities, is extremely valuable in a day when religious thinkers are all too willing to ignore psychic processes.

Because Jung has made some positive statements in regard to certain expressions of religious experience, religious leaders have frequently hailed him as a protagonist and confirmer of their faith. However, those who understand Jung are aware that he

said some things that are as devastating to certain forms of religion as some of Freud's remarks. He has frequently been quoted in support of kinds of religious activities that he did not approve.

Of course, Dr. Schaer is enthusiastic about his subject. We can admire him for that. But we can hardly accept without serious reservations the claim that the understanding of religion can only go forward along the trail that Jung has blazed. Jung is important for the psychology of religious experience, but there are other trails, too, that we must take. Ironically, one of those trails was blazed by none other than Freud!

CARROLL A. WISE

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Religion and the Intellectuals. PARTISAN REVIEW SERIES III. New York: The Partisan Review, 1950. pp. 139. 80¢ (paper).

This symposium consists of articles published in the *Partisan Review* in response to a request from its editors for an interpretation of the present turning of many intellectuals to religious faith. Among the twenty-nine contributors are several well-known philosophers and literary figures (W. H. Auden, William Barrett, George Boas, Robert Graves, etc.). Most of them could be classified as secularists or naturalists who view this swing toward religion from the outside. Among these are Hannah Arendt, A. J. Ayer, James T. Farrell, and John Dewey, though Dewey enters his plea for a reinterpretation of religion in naturalistic terms. A few of the writers are intellectuals who have made the "return trip" to a faith which stands in some way within one of the traditional religious positions. Some, like Jacques Maritain and Paul Tillich, speak from within the established faiths, though neither of these is to be classified simply as a traditionalist. While the contributions are uneven in quality and significance, taken all together this collection of sharp comments on the religious situation amounts to an important document.

In launching the project, the editors asked a series of questions to which most of the replies are addressed. The questions included a request for an analysis of the causes which lie behind the present trend toward religion. The editors also asked whether religion is necessary for culture; and whether it can be justified by its contribution to social discipline.

These questions seem to lead the discussion in the direction of a purely pragmatic explanation and justification of any religious profession. It is instructive to see how many of the contributors, both "believers" and "unbelievers," refuse to allow the discussion to turn on this point. They declare that the issues of religious faith involve ultimate values and beliefs which have to be dealt with in metaphysical terms and as matters of personal conviction.

All agree that there are particular factors in the present situation which provide the milieu in which this situation is to be understood. John Dewey speaks for many in saying that the breakdown of the overoptimistic expectations of the past generation is a prime factor. Clement Greenberg thinks much of the new religiousness is not really religion but a disguised estheticism. Irving Howe says the turn to religion is a manifestation of sickness; and Paul Kecskemeti attributes it partly to the bad conscience of those who have renounced both traditional religion and the utopian religion of social progressivism. A few such as Dowling, Sidney Hook, and A. J. Ayer remain com-

placently superior to their attitude toward the "believers." Hook and Meyer Schapiro enter vigorous defenses of a naturalistic humanistic position.

It is impossible to comment in detail on so many different theses. In this brief review only two general observations which occur to a Protestant reader of the symposium can be made.

One comment concerns the extent to which many sophisticated secularists of our day still regard religious belief as primarily a matter of escape from reality. Religion is identified with belief in supernatural aid and comfort for frustrated man. Reinhold Niebuhr (not represented here) has said that *gratitude* and *repentance* are the primary motives of religious living. Only one writer in the group, Alfred Kazin, singles out the sense of gratitude as the key to the fact that men find religion meaningful. Few stress the aspect of repentance. Most of the secularists seem to think that religion is really a search for cosmic comfort. That this applies to much of traditional religion must be admitted. How can it be made clear that the Christian faith is at heart an acceptance of reality and not an escape from it?

The other point is the extent to which the writers, both "believers" and "unbelievers," identify religion with Catholicism. It is not merely an accident that out of the whole twenty-nine, only Tillich, so far as I know, represents a distinctly Protestant approach. The fact is that modern Protestantism has not convinced the intellectuals that it offers a free and sound alternative to traditionalism. Why is this? Partly because, as Tillich has pointed out, Protestantism is so barren of symbols. There is important testimony from many writers in this symposium to the significance of myth, ritual, and dogma. But Protestantism does offer a free community of faith, in which the mind is not put into an authoritarian mould. That fact has not been made convincing to our contemporaries. This symposium could lead to some constructive self-examination on the part of contemporary Protestants. It gets down to basic issues in a new intellectual setting.

DANIEL D. WILLIAMS

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Religion in Human Experience. By JOHN R. EVERETT. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1950. pp. xvii-556. \$5.00.

This volume, written by the president of Hollins College, an assistant professor of philosophy at Columbia University at the time of the publication of the book, is intended mainly as a textbook. After dealing with "The Nature of Religion" in 40 pages, the author devotes 90 pages to Hinduism, 67 pages to Buddhism, 100 pages to Judaism, 154 pages to Christianity, and 45 pages to "Religion in the Modern World." A glossary of religio-theological terms is a helpful guide to the less informed readers, and an up-to-date bibliography serves as an aid to further reading on the subjects discussed. The book is carefully indexed for proper names and ideas. The format is excellent and contains 16 full pages of photographs to make the ideas graphic. In the story of the Hebrew tradition, the chapters take the reader through the Middle Ages and after the ghetto. The development of Christianity goes beyond the Reformation to the beginnings of movements like the Anabaptists, the Congregationalists, the Methodists, and the Anglicans in the centuries which follow. The book is clearly written; the organization is sound; and the volume should serve as an excellent text for college courses.

Some may wonder why Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, and Islam are not dealt with more than with occasional reference, or as they are met or assimilated in some other movement (such as Taoism in Zen Buddhism). The answer seems to be that since Buddhism springs out of Hinduism, and Christianity emerges from Judaism, we find in these four great religions the basic systems of religious thought in the world today, in so far as great numbers are concerned. It is true that Confucianism is more a culture than a religion, and Zoroastrianism has fewer than 100,000 members, so that they can easily be omitted. It does seem, however, that Islam with its large numbers and its momentous role in India might have been more fully included. But the book in itself is large, and the author accomplished his purpose in good fashion within its prescribed size. Some might also wish that more space had been given to "The Nature of Religion," which deals with the relation of religion to philosophy, theology, ethics, and culture; and where the defining characteristics of the sacred, the gods, myth and revelation, the soul, worship, and salvation are interpreted and described. But since the book is mainly a descriptive volume of great world religions, the proportion of pages to each section seems fair. The author's definition of religion as "the activity of man resulting from the recognition of nonnatural powers upon which he feels ultimately dependent," seems to hit fairly well at the general worth of religion; it contains both the ethical and the theological avenues, and seems to leave room for the psychological aspect. It seems close to Schleiermacher's definition that "Religion is man's feeling of absolute dependence upon God."

The results of this book, tried in student classes at Wesleyan University and Columbia University, will prove themselves of excellent worth for those who teach undergraduates.

THOMAS S. KEPLER

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The Christianity of Main Street. By THEODORE O. WEDEL. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950. pp. x-112. \$2.00.

This book seeks to do two things: to distinguish "classical" from "humanist" Christianity, and to tell us why we must return to the former. My judgment is that the first part of the task is more adequately performed than the second.

The first half of the book draws the contrast pointedly, even if with preweighted adjectives. Opposed to "Christianity of the ages" is the meager moralism of "remnant Christianity." One is a gospel of revelation and salvation; the other an impotent moral idealism. For one the Bible is the poignant drama of God's dealings with and search for man, a God-biography; the other sees it as a record of man's search for God and the Jesus-hero story. Classical Christianity is a challenging, startling gospel and church of redemptive power, the only force sufficient to counter the modern demonic religions of power, namely fascism and communism. Humanist Christianity is a pathetic Jesus-imitation gospel and fellowship without a theological basis, powerless to maintain its ethic in modern secular society, logically ending in a secular humanism itself.

The main thesis of Canon Wedel's book is that we must confront our anemic "Christian" church and culture with its lost classical heritage—though "classical" does not quite mean medieval, is indeed somewhat vague. We have had too much sterile theologizing, perhaps. But let us replace both arid and theologism and modern antitheological feeling with the "story theology" of the Bible, and the Apostles' and

Nicene Creeds. These latter are "not systems of doctrine. They are scenarios of the Bible." Classical Christianity "stands or falls on the issue of these creeds." He would agree in the main with another recent author: "The Christian faith is the most exciting drama that ever staggered the imagination of man—and the dogma is the drama." (Dorothy L. Sayers in *Creed or Chaos*.)

Here is where my difficulties with the book begin. That modern liberal Christianity should clearly recognize how humanistic it has become; that the man in the street, who won't read any of our religious tomes anyway, should know how ill-informed he is concerning Christian doctrine; that we will get nowhere worth going religiously by neglecting basic doctrine—well and good. But the precise difference between "story theology" and real (?) theology evades me. "Came down from heaven," "begotten not made," "resurrection of the body"—were not these as theological and controversial in their time, and since, as any doctoral dissertation? The latter is perhaps more prosy, but what troubles moderns with a "remnant" of Christianity is the theological content of the creeds, not their form.

My impression of the book, with all its excellent qualities of earnestness, concern for vital religion, simple directness, attempted honesty, and suggestive phraseology, is that the author has concerned himself more with a return to "classical" Christianity—that we might be *Christianly* Christian, not humanistically Christian—than with meeting the challenge which modern thought raises for basic Christian theological positions. The only live option allowed us is to reaffirm our faith in the theology of the ancient creeds.

WINSTON L. KING

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The Philosophical Forum, Volume VIII. Boston: The Boston University Philosophical Club, Spring, 1950. pp. 48. 50¢ (paper).

It was highly appropriate that Edgar Sheffield Brightman's students should honor him in a commemorative way on his thirtieth year at Boston University and his retirement. It is also to be hoped that some more extensive publication will be prepared, for Dr. Brightman's work has been outstanding and a great credit to his University. There could not conceivably have been any chair in philosophy in his generation more difficult to fill than the one vacated by Borden Parker Bowne, and Brightman has filled it nobly and brilliantly.

The small brochure, Number Eight of the *Philosophical Forum*, provides five articles: one by Brightman himself, "The Teaching of Philosophy in Boston University," which gives token of careful consideration and teaching genius in an age when philosophy is generally showing a decline in interest. Boston University has, by him, been made a notable exception to the general rule, and other teachers of philosophy will do well to study his methods. Much credit must be assigned to the personality of Brightman himself, however, for one can scarcely conceive of a sleeping student in any of his classes.

There is an article on "The Philosophical Imperative" by Robert N. Beck, one by Walter G. Muelder on "The Social Philosophy of Edgar Sheffield Brightman," another by Roland Stahl on "Hegel and Dr. Brightman's Idea of Truth," and a final contribution by Peter A. Bertocci on "Brightman's View of the Self, the Person, and the Body." The latter is distinctly critical; and all of them, to our personal sorrow, dwell upon his Hegelianism.

Despite our warm friendship and Brightman's generous co-operation through more than thirty years, this has been our one point of dispute. This reviewer considers it a loss of time to tag with personalism an Absolutist whose absolutism has had such direful results in human history. Even to Brightman we view Hegelianism as "an old man of the sea" which has hindered rather than helped his otherwise clear thinking. This is indicated in his doctrine of the "given," which is somewhat of a demiurge (some would call it a devil) with power to resist permanently the desires of the Almighty. In our dumbness we cannot see why such an Absolute is not forever *conditioned*; and an Absolute conditioned by powers beyond his control is not Absolute.

The only conditioning which saves the face of an Absolute, retaining his character, is self-conditioning, in the interest of a worthy purpose. If we are to hold to the actual Deity of Jesus, he must be viewed as God in the form of flesh, sacrificing himself in order "to bring many sons to glory." In order to do this and confer upon man the spirituality of the sons of God, all moral goodness must be voluntary. Such is the inevitable basis of all morality. This seems to us the quintessence of the teachings of Jesus and the greatest message of Personalism.

One does not mean to imply by this any deficiency in Brightman's loyalty to the full Christian message; but his great accomplishment for contemporary philosophy lies in his competent leadership, his diligent scholarship, and his genuine theism in an age of doubt. He has done a great work which will some day be even more adequately appreciated, but we do not conceive it to be along the line of a Hegelian revival. In the light of the facts, the effort to prove Hegel's personalism against the undoubted set of his system seems a waste of time.

RALPH TYLER FLEWELLING

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Esther. By NORAH LOFTS. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950. pp. 163. \$2.50.

Stories From Holy Writ. By HELEN WADDELL. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950. pp. ix-244. \$2.75.

In these days when reading time is diminishing to the vanishing point, when digests and condensations of books are popular, there is a demand for "Short Bibles" and "Shorter Bibles." Running counter to this is another tendency in popularizing the Bible—a tendency to elaborate, expand, embroider its tales. Apparently the Bible itself is too bare, too restrained for our taste, or we are too unimaginative to read between the lines. Most recent books of Bible stories for both children and adults tell us "what might have been" in the way of conversations, personal appearance, motivations, additional characters and incidents, which presumably make the story more striking or more appealing.

This modern "midrash" throws light on our current tastes. In Norah Lofts' *Esther* the search for a successor to Vashti fills pages and reminds one of nothing so much as the process of selecting a "Miss America." The thirty-days period during which Esther was not summoned to the king's presence is made into a long story of a quarrel, the cause being Esther's criticism of the way Haman persuaded the king, during impromptu charades, to make himself ridiculous in the part of the Queen of Sheba, with a blackened face and with a piece of a curtain for a skirt. The

orders for the massacre of the Jews throughout the empire are simply rescinded, Esther and Mordecai being apparently too noble to ask that the Jews have a chance to do some slaughtering themselves, and the book ends with a love scene.

"Esther, . . . a little fearful that Artaxerxes might miss Haman's entertaining company, had set herself out to be amusing. And at the end of one burst of laughter Artaxerxes turned to her and said impulsively, 'Esther, I do love you!' 'My lord,' she said . . . 'that is very gratifying news. . . . You see, I love you too.' He leaned over and kissed her, and this time there was no . . . shadow of Haman between them."

Mrs. Lofts has written an entertaining book, with the skilled artistry which won praises for her *Women in the Old Testament*.

Helen Waddell years ago charmed many of us with her *Peter Abelard* and has shown her scholarly abilities as a medievalist in other writings, but *Stories From Holy Writ* is her first venture in the biblical field. She deals with a few selected stories only, four fifths of the book being from the Old Testament. Indeed, the New Testament selections might be called brief meditations on story themes, among which are "The Star which they saw in the East," and glimpses of Nicodemus, St. Paul, and Matthew the publican. These are handled with a delicate touch and sensitivity to spiritual meanings, and are evidently meant for adult readers.

The first two chapters have a quaint charm of their own, for here the story of the young Moses is told out-of-doors to three little children, while the narrator helps them see the brook in their own garden as the river Nile. But the rest of the Old Testament stories, the long accounts of Joseph, Jacob, Saul, and Nehemiah which make up the main body of the book, are for older children or for anybody who welcomes the assistance of a vivid imagination and a clever pen in making the old characters live again.

One finds here a concern that the religious values shall not be overlooked. Indeed at times a deeper religious note is struck than the Old Testament story warrants. Joseph in prison said to himself, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God." After the story of Jacob at Bethel we read, "God did not want Jacob's tithes; he wanted Jacob. But it was twenty years before Jacob found that out." Of Abraham in Ur, "A hunger came upon him for a God who was not like the moon, far away and different and cold, but a God who was like himself, only greater far." Is not Miss Waddell doing just what we suppose the Yahwist and the Elohist did in their day, make the ancient tales speak with the religious fervor and point of view of the later interpreter? And is that not still legitimate? She, like them, is an excellent teller of stories.

MURIEL STREIBERT CURTIS

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Near East Panorama. By GLORA M. WYSNER. Illustrated by PHILIP J. AZIZ. New York: The Friendship Press, 1950. pp. x-182. \$1.00 (paper); \$1.50 (cloth).

In *Near East Panorama* the author, from the vantage point of her knowledge and experience, shows the reader the vast panorama of the part of the world known as "the Near East." She likens this area to a colorful Oriental carpet, full of interest and variety. Being primarily interested in people, she first introduces the reader to

a number of Near Easterners, first in North Africa where she herself has been a missionary, and then in Turkey, Lebanon, Palestine, Iran, and Arabia, countries which she has visited several times during recent years.

The reader already has considerable knowledge of past history in the Near Eastern countries known as "Bible Lands." Here all three of the great monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam had their origin. Recently, there has been seething political unrest in this part of the world, culminating in war, the partitioning of Palestine, and creation of multitudes of homeless Arab refugees.

Social and economic changes have been great in the Near East during the past three decades. Elevation of the position of women and discarding of the veil for Muslim women in such countries as Turkey and Iran are hopeful changes. So also is the discovery of vast oil fields in Eastern Arabia. The desert, formerly inhabited only by Bedouin shepherds roaming from oasis to oasis, is now the home of thousands of foreign employees of oil companies together with large numbers of indigenous personnel. Oil has brought great wealth to the Arab rulers of these parts, with correspondingly improved economic conditions for their subjects.

But *Near East Panorama* is intended primarily as a mission study book. During the last thirteen decades the light and life of Christ have been brought to many of these regions by Christian education, literacy campaigns, the printing and circulation of Christian literature, the work of mission hospitals, care of orphans, of lepers and the blind, and many other services. No one can estimate how great has been the impact of Christian missions in the Near East. Relatively few of the Protestant denominations have had a part in this contribution. How much more could be accomplished if the need were known and the responsibility accepted by them all!

ELEANOR T. CALVERLEY

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Fruits of Faith. Ed. by J. Richard Spann. Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$2.50. A three-part symposium by eighteen outstanding ministers, educators, and administrators, from eight denominations. These lectures were originally prepared for the Thirtieth Annual Conference on Ministerial Training, held at Evanston, Illinois, and are grouped under the headings: "The Faith," "Fruits in the Individual," and "Fruits in Society." Two of them (J. F. Olson on "Christ" and Emile Cailliet on "Personal Religious Experiences") have appeared in *RELIGION IN LIFE*.

A Gospel for the Social Awakening. Selections from the Writings of Walter Rauschenbusch. Compiled by

Benjamin E. Mays, introduction by C. Howard Hopkins. Haddam House, Association Press. \$2.00. "One who reads Rauschenbusch for the first time at midcentury senses the note of vitality and prophetic insight. One who rereads Rauschenbusch realizes that this man was too profound in his interpretation of the Christian gospel to be outdated and that the awakening for which he longed is overdue. Truly this man has something to say to our times."

Russian Nonconformity. By Serge Bolshakoff. Westminster. \$3.00. Dr. K. S. Latourette says in his foreword, "Here is a book which none who wish to understand the Russia with which we have to do can afford to ignore." Mil-

lions of Russian Christians are outside the State Church; and "Russian Non-conformity always represented and still represents a popular protest against state intervention in the realm of religion."

Pascal's Pensées. Bilingual edition. Translation, notes, and introduction by H. F. Stewart. Pantheon Books. \$5.00. A completely fresh translation and a new arrangement by the late Dean of The Chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge, who was a noted authority on Pascal, combining literary and theological interests.

Two Religions. By John McKenzie. Lutterworth. 7/6. "A comparative study of some distinctive ideas and ideals in Hinduism and Christianity." "The similarities between the two religions are superficial and the differences very deep." Author formerly Philosophy Professor and Principal of Wilson College, Bombay; Moderator of the Church of Scotland 1946-47.

Charles Freer Andrews. A biography by Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Marjorie Sykes. Harper. \$3.75. Foreword by Gandhi. A graphic and fascinating account of a very human saint.

Sayings of Jesus. By Heinrich Weinel and Conrad Henry Moehlman. N. Y.: Bookman Associates. \$1.00 cloth, 50¢ paper. Prof. Weinel of Jena made the original outline of the teachings; Prof. Moehlman (Rochester, Michigan, Chicago) abbreviated and rearranged it and used it for many years in teaching the history of Christianity. Popular with his students, it has also established itself as a pastor's manual, in Sunday schools, and for general reading.

The Jesus of History. By T. R. Glover. Harper. \$2.50. A welcome reprinting. "Those who wish to know something of 'the historical Jesus' must

return again and again to Dr. Glover's matchless study."

Bible History Digest. By Elmer W. K. Mould. N. Y.: Exposition Press. \$3.00. The Professor of Bible at Elmira College and one-time president of the National Association of Biblical Instructors has written a book "to help overcome the rampant and appalling biblical illiteracy of our time." A graphic 188-page history, presented with plenty of maps, diagrams, tables, and striking chapter headings.

Positive Protestantism. By Hugh Thomson Kerr, Jr. Westminster. \$2.50. "A tract for the times." "Positive Protestantism" means unequivocal proclamation of the gospel, "the good news that God was in Christ for man's redemption. It was this that the Reformers rediscovered in their day, and it is this that is needed for the re-creation of contemporary Protestantism."

Prisoners of Hope. By Herbert C. Alleman. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press. \$1.50. A collection of heartening essays in simple but graphic language, by a great Christian teacher now past eighty.

Living Joyously. By Kirby Page. Rinehart. \$1.50. An anthology of devotional readings for every day in the year; indicated Bible reading, meditation by Dr. Page or quoted from other distinguished writers or clergymen, and prayer.

Bright Is the Shaken Torch. By Arthur A. Cowan. Scribner. \$3.00. Sermons on the basic themes of the Christian faith, by the pastor of Inverleith Church, Edinburgh. A worthy companion in "The Scholar as Preacher" Series, to A. J. Gossip's *Experience Worketh Hope* and James S. Stewart's *The Strong Name*.

The Religion of College Teachers. By R. H. Edwin Espy. Association Press. \$2.75. A useful study sponsored by the National Protestant Council on Higher Education and the National Council on Religion in Higher Education. Based on exhaustive research, it is organized so that the main issues are highlighted clearly. Competent and significant.

Religious Perspectives of College Teaching. Five pamphlets, Edward W. Hazen Foundation (Yale), New Haven, Conn. An illuminating series, in which English Literature is treated by Hoxie N. Fairchild, Economics by Kenneth E. Boulding, History by E. Harris Harbison, Classics by Alfred R. Bellinger, Philosophy by Theodore M. Greene.

The Story of Religion in America. By William Warren Sweet. Harper. \$3.75. This is the second revised and enlarged edition of a standard work in its field. Contains a new chapter entitled "The American Churches in Peace and War," bringing the book up to date since 1939.

The Blind Spot in American Public Education. By Clyde Lemont Hay. Macmillan. \$2.00. A well-known educator states the case for religious education in our public schools; believes that a type of religious education can be planned which will satisfy Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and the Constitution.

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Leland Foster Wood. Macmillan. \$2.50. The Secretary of the Federal Council's Commission on Marriage and the Home gives us another useful book on marriage counseling, full of case material.

From This Day Forward. By Kenneth J. Foreman. Richmond: Outlook Publishers. \$1.25. A delightful little book, subtitled "Thoughts About a Christian Marriage." Addressed to young couples, it discusses the marriage vows with candor, humor, and deep wisdom.

The Pilgrim's Progress. Rewritten for young people by Wade C. Smith. Boston: W. A. Wilde. \$1.75. Illustrated by his cartoons ("little jets"). Reduces the story to 104 pages of comfortably readable type, preserving the allegory while eliminating the long doctrinal arguments. Attractive.

The Family Book of Favorite Hymns. By Arthur Austin. Funk & Wagnalls. \$4.95. Words and music to over 100 favorite hymns, with short commentaries and biographical data on composers and writers. Beautifully illustrated by George Loudon, Jr.

Authority in the Apostolic Age. By R. R. Williams. S. C. M. Press. 8/6. Investigation of the important and controversial topic of the nature and scope of authority in the primitive church. Concluding with applications to contemporary issues.